

I early found out that when I worked for myself alone, myself alone worked for me, but when I worked for others also, others also worked for me.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Winning Your Way with People

By K. C. INGRAM

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WINNING YOUR WAY WITH PEOPLE

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TO MY WIFE, IRIS, WHOSE ABILITY
TO LIVE WITH ME FOR NEARLY A
QUARTER OF A CENTURY PROVES THAT
IT IS POSSIBLE TO GET ALONG
WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE

Why Not Have a Good Time in Life?

Dear Reader,

Why do you suppose some people you know have such a good time in life? How is it that they seem to get things done so easily? Why do they have such "good luck"?

What is the secret of their magiclike touch in dealing with other people? Can we learn it and use it in our own everyday lives?

What are people like, anyhow, and why do they act the way they do?

We invite you to look into these interesting and important matters with us. This book makes it easy for you. We examine the life stories of actual people who live lives such as yours. In these true stories of success and failure, of joy and tragedy, of life and death, we find certain clues to why people act as they do. We check these clues against the findings of modern psychologists and the conclusions of the world's great teachers. We check them again against the practical experiences several thousand persons have related in conferences on human relations.

Finally, the results are put together in a simple philosophy of personal action. This is stated in a few words as a principle that runs through the book. But along with the principle there

are suggested scores of specific methods of successfully dealing with people in the small details of everyday living.

We ask you to look at these suggestions and see if they make sense. If they do, try out the suggestions in your dealings with others in your office or shop or home; try them out with acquaintances, or in the baffling relations with the opposite sex. See if you don't get magiclike results!

We shall find it quite a relief to admit, in the beginning, that none of us can be perfect in human relations. It wouldn't pay if a person could, for humankind can't stand perfection. Recall how the Persian rugmakers purposely weave an error in design? "Only Allah is perfect," they say. People like a little human fallibility. A diamond-in-the-rough who means well, no matter how awkward he may be, endears himself to his associates; but nobody likes a slicker.

This book offers no slick methods of manipulating people. There are plenty of specific methods, such as those in Part II, of getting ideas across to people, or such as the methods of relaxing in Chapter Sixteen. But all these methods are tied to an underlying principle of living and working in harmony with people.

With this principle in mind, why should we not take human nature just as it is and find the way to get a result with it? We mean a helpful result in happiness and success.

By happiness we mean personal satisfaction on the job and at home; a sense of harmony with people and the world we live in; making life easier, making it a pleasure. By success we mean whatever the reader may consider his goal—help toward advancement, security, health; and, more important, the respect, good will, and affection of other people.

This, you will note, is a very personal book about people and you. Do you seem to have more than your share of difficult people to deal with? If so, this book is especially for

you. If, on the other hand, people seem interested in you and glad to lend you a helping hand, this book will confirm and add to the value of your personal ways with people.

K. C. INGRAM

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PART ONE

People and You

CHAPTER 1 Will People Make or Break You?

CHAPTER 2 The “Just-as-I-am” Complex

CHAPTER 3 The Importance of Being Important, and
the Basic Rule

CHAPTER 4 How to Keep from Hating People

CHAPTER 5 People Will Pay You Back

CHAPTER ONE

Will People Make or Break You?

It was very late one Saturday night in December, 1945, when Martha made the decision. For weeks she had been deeply troubled in mind and spirit. Jim's home-coming from the war had forced the crisis.

Joan, Martha's closest friend, told us the story. The two girls had graduated from high school in 1943. To do their part in the war effort they took jobs in the local telegraph office, waiting on customers.

Jim joined the armed forces late in 1943. Martha's engagement to Jim was a tacit understanding, nothing formal. They had just drifted into it.

The going was tough in the telegraph office late in 1943. It became a clamor in '44, bedlam in '45. Everybody wanted to send telegrams—in a hurry. They didn't want to wait. But wait was what they had to do. The customers got worse and worse. They shouted; they were sarcastic; they had no manners. "What a beating they gave us," the girls thought bitterly.

Joan and Martha began to show the strain in their faces, in their postures, and in their manners. They were too tired at night to go out, too tired even to sleep. They were heavy-eyed and listless when they returned to work in the morning.

Jim came home in November, 1945. He took Martha out several times. But the spark, the glad feeling that used to excite them, was gone. Jim was little changed, but Martha seemed dull and irritable. Jim finally dropped out and Martha saw him no more.

Tears were in Martha's eyes this Saturday night when she and Joan sat down to talk things out. The crux of the trouble was, they agreed, that they were letting the people they dealt with break them down. They'd tried everything—so they thought. First, they'd tried smacking people down. Later they tried cold silence. Both of these tactics made matters worse, led to violent dispute. Finally, they'd tried patience, just sustained patience, seeking to keep things smooth and pleasant. But always they had failed because eventually some really impossible person came in and created a scene that left them nerve-racked and upset for the day. Eventually they fell into a completely defensive attitude. They braced against expected attack, ready to counterattack. They were tense. The hard pull of nerve and muscular strain showed in their knitted brows—an attitude the customers took to be veiled hostility.

As they talked this Saturday night, it gradually dawned on these two girls that their own approach to the people might have something to do with their constantly mounting troubles. That was the problem they had to solve, they agreed: the people.

"We'll not let them do it," Martha decided. "No matter how loud they are. Let's relax and go out to them first before they begin to raise a fuss. Let's see what a big treatment of courtesy will do to keep them from pushing us around." Joan agreed with a burst of enthusiasm. "We'll just kill 'em with kindness," she said.

The following Monday they managed to keep calm and pleasant. They began to "go out" to the customers. They went out to the customers with a friendly word or act, before the

customers took over and set the tone of the transaction. They kept the initiative. They set the tone. Things went pretty well. After work they felt good. Next day, Tuesday, they still held to their resolve—smiling, friendly, and courteous—still going out to the customers.

The tension eased; customers relaxed and smiled. Martha and Joan found the work easier too, and they got more done. It became a sort of game—to win people rather than be frustrated by them—a most interesting game. They were fascinated with the thought that they were standing, detached and apart, watching themselves keep one situation after another under control.

Day after day things went more smoothly. On Friday Joan said, *"Something has happened. A better class of people is coming in here!"*

When a friend told us this story, we stopped him right there and only later found how Martha "got her old sparkle back"—and Jim too. The significance of Joan's natural remark, "a better class of people is coming in here," struck us with tremendous impact.

Can we make the people we deal with a better class of people—almost miraculously—by changing our own attitude and manner of dealing with them? It may be said in the simplest way that this book is written to answer that question.

Here is a story by George Pearce, a college mate with whom, after many years, we had a reunion in 1947. It, too, illustrates the point of this book so dramatically, so tragically, that we place it here in the first chapter. It is about Benton Hayward, a lad who came to live in the same house as our friend at an eastern university.

"Bent was a fine-looking chap," Pearce recalled. "He was active and everyone liked him—at first. He seemed to have no bad habits. But after a little while a lot of little antagonisms

developed. He had an argument with this fellow, a misunderstanding with another, about small matters. Pretty soon everyone in the house was inclined to leave Bent to himself. He was walled off, you might say. There was never any big row, you understand; and when I was graduated and left, the situation was that Bent was just mildly disliked.

"Well, I didn't see Bent for more than twenty years. Then he dropped into my office late one afternoon. He looked a bit seedy. His clothes were a little shabby and his attitude seemed furtive. We talked. Around 5 o'clock, I said I'd have to go home.

"'Aren't you going to take me home to dinner?' he asked.

"'Sure,' I said, although I thought it was a little odd that he would come right out and ask me. He brought a sizable package with him to our house.

"After dinner that night, I had to leave the living room for a few minutes. He sat talking to my wife. When I came back, I was amazed to find him in what amounted to a violent argument with my wife. He was insisting that she buy a cheap, shoddy rug.

"It developed that Bent had had many jobs during the years past. When the depression came in 1930, he was one of the first in his business organization to be dismissed. He had no luck in getting another position and finally had gone to selling these cheap rugs from door to door. That was in 1935.

"Now," said Pearce, "just today, I was talking with Bill Wilson and Bent's name came up. And Bill gave me the rest of the story.

"Two years ago a hobo was found dead on a railroad right of way in Arizona. He had been killed by a train. The dead man was Benton Hayward. From the name tag in the pocket of the coat he was wearing he was identified. The coat had been given him a few months before by a man who was one of his boyhood friends."

What lay back of Benton Hayward's tragic end? Could it be that his habit of offending or irritating people was the cause? Could it be because he lost all his friends and human connections that he finally became a hopeless wanderer?

This is a true story, with only names and locations changed, as are the other stories in this book. Let's think seriously about this once proud young lad who, bewildered and defeated by he knew not what, trudged across the desert to his end, his contentious mouth at last stopped with dust.

Just before the Second World War, the president of one of America's great corporations died. This suddenly brought to the board of directors the problem of appointing his successor. They had to find a man to guide a company doing an annual volume of business of \$500,000,000.

The directors might have gone outside the organization for a new leader. Frequently that is necessary when exactly the right man is not available within a company. But in this case, the right man was at hand. His associates, employees, the company's customers, and prominent people dealing with the company agreed on this. He was appointed. And his record since, through the most critical years of his company and his country, proved he was the man for the place.

How did it happen that all these people agreed he was the man for the job? The main fact was that his relationships with people over a long time had been harmonious. To be sure, he had ability, persistence, and strength of character; and he had learned the business as he came up from the lowest ranks. But his greatest strength was his administrative ability. He knew how to get people to help him do things. A fellow officer said, "He's the easiest man to work with in the outfit. He never issues orders—he makes suggestions or requests." Big George, an employee, walked in on two directors and said, "We want him because he's always fair and friendly in his dealings with

us. He speaks to us on the street. He stops and talks to us when he visits the shops or offices about our jobs, our youngsters. He seems interested in us as individuals." Customers and social acquaintances liked him.

It is a fact full of meaning that his most frequent comment was and is, "I like people." He also liked young people, children, sports, and dogs. Let us tell you a story about him:

Next door to this man lived a couple who were childless, but they had adopted a little boy. One Saturday afternoon during the time this business executive was vice-president of his company, he was standing by the back fence of his home. Looking over into the next yard, he saw the small boy. He fell into conversation with the lad, and finally asked: "If you could have anything you wanted, what would you ask for?" "A kite," the boy replied.

Now, you'd expect that in such a situation an important businessman would send someone to town to buy the boy a kite. But not our friend. He said, "Come on over here, Sonny, and you and I will make a kite." The boy came over, and the man of fifty and the boy of five spent an interesting half afternoon making the kite.

This may seem to be a slight story, but does it not offer some light on why this man had many friends pulling for him when the big turning point came in his life?

The story of this executive's business success seems to illustrate the principle set forth by the psychologist, Dr. Alfred Adler: "It will appear in the end that we have no problems in our lives but social problems; and those problems can be solved only if we are interested in others."

More directly, does it not illustrate the very practical point that *people make or break you?*

On the night of April 8, 1946, a young woman threw herself from a high building in San Francisco.

"I have no friends," she had told companions. "Life isn't worth living."

She was young. Life was before her with all its possibilities of happiness and success. Why did she end her life?

She thought she was the victim of circumstances and events. Investigation showed she led a self-centered life. Unthinking, unmindful of the people with whom she lived—unmindful of the fact that people could make or break her. She was one of the vast number of human beings who fail to act in their own best interests. Eventually she found herself alone, with no friends to turn to. She resorted to drink, finally to suicide.

You surely have read of many another case of suicide committed because the unfortunate person had no one to whom he or she could turn in time of crisis. In fact, except for ill health, is not suicide nearly always the result of some failure in human relations? *Are not human relations often actually a matter of life or death?*

People make or break us. Other people, their opinions of us, their actions toward us determine the degree of success we enjoy.

Dean M. P. O'Brien of the College of Engineering, University of California, once said, "Our records indicate we don't have any engineering graduates who fail because of lack of technical skill. Those who do not get ahead have failed almost entirely because they didn't know how to get along with people. Of course, in engineering a man must have the technical know-how; he must be reliable, energetic, and honest; but beyond that, knowledge of human nature, tact, and diplomacy are necessary for any substantial success he may attain."

If that is true in engineering, think how much more important good human relations are in selling and other such jobs; how much more important in social and family life.

A. T. Mercier, president of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company, says, "Technical skill is seldom sufficient for marked

success. Industrial leaders find it relatively easy to obtain technically skilled workers; but the great need at the top is for men who can organize, direct, inspire, and harmonize the work of others. In selling and service work, courtesy and consideration for others are the first requirements of success."

Think clearly about your own experience. Your success, any success you've had in business or social life, was due to what certain people thought of you, wasn't it? Of course you had to be efficient and effective. But beyond that, people's good opinion translated into action made the success.

Or failure? People's poor opinion, *justified or not*, can fire a man and make him lose out. "By far more persons lose their jobs because of some personal eccentricity than for lack of skill or technical knowledge," says Max Shoen, head of the Department of Education and Psychology of Carnegie Institute of Technology.

What makes any one of us happy or sad? Opinions of other people. We may think we are happy over an achievement we feel we have made alone, singlehanded; but what really made us happy is the approbation, the approval, the admiration of other people. This is true not only in business life, but also in our social and family relations.

Let's sum up the whole matter this way: (1) *Our success and happiness depend upon the attitude and actions of other people toward us.* (2) *This attitude is determined by our control of our own attitudes toward other people.* (3) *We can make our attitude toward others just about what we want it to be.*

Anyone can change and improve his habits in dealing with people, regardless of his age. This change will require thought and persistence, but after the first breaking through of existing habits, it is easy; it's really a pleasure, and it will become easier and easier as we go along. At the same time the benefits will pile up like a snowball rolling down hill.

Finally, let's note that the responsibility for good relations with other people rests with us individually. Let's not try to dodge the responsibility by criticizing others or alibiing ourselves. Rather, let's go out positively and actively to bring other people and their interests into harmony with us and our interests.

Let us see now if we agree on these points:

1. We can set the tone or nature of our dealings with people by going out to them with a friendly word or act, first, before the other persons act.
2. The habit of disputing with people over small issues may cause a person to lose his friends.
3. Human relations may be a matter of life and death.
4. Liking people is the beginning of good human relations.
5. The chief cause of a person's losing his job is inability to get along with others.
6. Our success and happiness depend upon the attitude and actions of other people toward us.
7. The attitude of other people is determined by our control of our own attitude toward them.
8. We can make our attitude toward others whatever we want it to be.

CHAPTER TWO

The "Just-as-I-am" Complex

Every person resents interruption of his established line of action. The automobile driver boils when another cuts in ahead of him. A person walking along the sidewalk dislikes being jostled. If you drink your coffee strong and boiling hot, you hate it served weak and lukewarm.

Earliest sign of protest in a human being is that of a baby crying out upon being restricted or disturbed. This "rage reaction" at being interfered with continues through life, Dr. John B. Watson, formerly of Johns Hopkins University, points out in his book, "Psychological Care of Children." Nobody wants to change his habits.

"I am what I am," many a person is apt to say. "I'm not going to try to put on any correspondence-school type of personality. I'm not going to be a phony. People can take me or leave me, just as I am."

Most people who assume this attitude think they are being very hardheaded. On the contrary, are they not just being ruled by their vanity? Are they not quite impractical in failing to see that they have to deal with the facts of human nature just as realistically as they deal with the facts about an automobile, a stone wall, water, or the climate?

By refusing to make an effort to gear themselves in with others, such people set up all sorts of human ill will to work

against them. All such people fail to achieve satisfaction from life. Some lose their jobs, their friends, their loved ones. Some find life itself intolerable.

Psychologists tell us this stubborn, senseless attitude is often set up as a defense of an oversensitive ego.

Take the case of a railroad ticket clerk we used to know. When a customer approached, he was always slow to come up to the counter, slow to notice the customer. His greeting, if any, was an impersonal, "Well?" He spoke in a flat voice, devoid of interest. His face was expressionless. He volunteered no information. He appeared anxious to get quit of the whole unpleasant business of waiting on the customer.

One evening in a restaurant we sat next to this man, his wife, and two children. The man looked at his plate, out of the window, anywhere except at his wife and children. He said nothing unless spoken to, then responded only in monosyllables. The children were bad-mannered, jittery, causing a disturbance. Suddenly the man spoke loudly to one of the children, jerked the child off his chair, attracting the attention of nearby diners.

"You're a student of psychology," we said to the friend dining with us, telling him of the man's habitual surliness to customers when at work. "What's wrong with that fellow?"

"He shows the main symptoms of an inferiority complex," he replied. "What's gnawing at him is the fear that other people look down on him. His defense is to be indifferent to other people, to attempt to belittle people, *to make other people seem little so he will seem big*. Not only small-job people do this. Bosses who feel unsure of themselves act the same way—they are mean, tough, or blustery.

"That poor fellow is unhappy and making himself unhappier," he continued. "It's tragic that his bad habits, his 'defense mechanism,' carry over into his family life. His wife and children are in for a bad time."

That ticket clerk later disappeared from the ticket office. We asked an associate what had become of him. "Oh," he replied, "he just got sore and quit. He got to thinking everybody in the office was against him."

Here was a case of a man driven by his senseless ego, acting emotionally without the benefit of good common sense. He was one of a vast number of persons who fail to act in their own best interests, who are unhappy themselves, who cause much unhappiness to others, and who eventually fail in business, social, and family life.

Why do people act like that? Is there anything wrong or degrading in being interested in other people? In showing it? Does the habit of recognizing people, of being courteous to them, and actually helping them, indicate a small man or a big man?

Let us remember that such a person as the ticket clerk is suffering from an inferiority complex. We mean *suffering*. He is very unhappy; we should feel sorry for him. Let's not make the mistake of combatting him with his own methods. Saadi, the Persian philosopher, advises, "Oppose kindness to perverseness. The heavy sword will not cut soft silk. By using sweet words and gentleness you may lead an elephant with a hair."

Of course it is true that customers, too, are often difficult to get along with. The cause generally is the same—an inner feeling of inferiority or uncertainty of their own personal worth. They are the types who make it a practice to send back the first cantaloupe in a restaurant. They are usually loud. Consciously or unconsciously they seek to attract attention as a recognition of their personal importance. Usually they defeat their own purpose. The bystanders note them as people of poor quality and lacking good manners.

On the other hand, the customer who is considerate of salespeople and others serving the public nearly always gets the breaks. The wise salesman will give average service to the

customer however arrogant or overbearing the customer may be. That is the salesman's job. He can't be insulted unless he himself confesses a feeling of uncertainty about his personal worth. But for the kindly, considerate customer the average salesman will make extra efforts to show unusual goods or special values.

It may be noted, to return to the subject of inferiority complexes, that human perverseness often takes other forms. Doubtless you've known people who cherish and hug to their breasts other thoughts that tend to defeat them. Some boast of their quick tempers. Others revel in the idea that they are nervous or sick. Still others take refuge in the thought the world is against them, that they've had a bad break. All such thoughts are shown in attitudes or remarks that repel associates and lead to the failure of the person who holds such thoughts.

The natural desire of everyone is to act in self-interest. But it is an amazing fact that *many people do not act in their own best interests*. The reason for this strange situation is that most people act emotionally, impulsively, really without reasoning, in their relations with other people.

That people are governed by emotions, by what they feel, far more than by what they think, has long been recognized. But it was not until Sigmund Freud, the Austrian psychologist, that there was any sort of general acknowledgment that people can definitely help themselves by putting the thinking part of their brain in control over the stupid, unreasoning part of the brain, the Ego, the ME. This vital point is simply stated by Lawrence Gould, consulting psychologist, who says, "Once you can see things straight, your feelings will come straight, too."

How this inability to control our unreasoning emotions may lead us into unnecessary difficulties with other people and so work against our objectives may be illustrated by a story from a lawyer acquaintance.

Recently this man, attorney for a large public-service company, told us of an employee who came to see him because a customer with whom the employee had had a violent altercation threatened to sue the company. The employee, an aggressive, vigorous-spoken man, was voluble in justifying his conduct.

"This customer insulted me in the presence of a number of people," the employee snorted. "I'm entitled to some respect. I can't let him get away with that."

"The customer has the same viewpoint," the lawyer replied. "I have here the statements of the customer and yourself. They are remarkably alike. Each of you claims abusive language, threats, and public humiliation. Now, perhaps it's too much to expect that anyone can see himself, impartially, but perhaps you may get something from consideration of my own experience.

"I've been criticized many times by attorneys, by judges in open courtroom, and by others," the attorney continued. "I don't especially like it, but I never feel belittled. Confidentially, I know I'm a very good lawyer and a good all-round character. I honestly feel I'm too smart to let myself be involved in trouble with someone, regardless of that someone's low or unfair tactics, if that is going to work against my personal interests. I have a feeling that my control over my emotions and over the situation proves I'm a superior person.

"In this case the record shows that you were technically right under the store's rules and under the law. It also shows that the customer was right in a practical way; he was morally right. We don't want to go to law with the customer because both he and we would lose in the long run. Thus far the customer has suffered much mental anguish, and he will suffer more if we don't patch it up with him.

"And how about you? You are having an unpleasant time with your bosses and with me. As matters stand now, you are

regarded as an unsafe person to trust in dealing with other people. Frankly, you have a black mark against you.

"These disputes and rows are started by the first person who raises his voice and speaks a little harshly or who makes a flat arbitrary statement, such as 'You can't do that!' Now the fellow who speaks harshly or makes the arbitrary statement usually does so quite unintentionally. But the other person doesn't know that. He just hears the command type of statement or overbearing tone in the voice and without consciously thinking he flares back. So two people become involved in a senseless altercation that will cost each plenty. And either one with a little self-restraint could control the situation and save himself and the other party a great deal of grief."

The parties to the incident became reconciled and good relations were established all around. But that is not the point of the story. The point is that we all need to understand what causes these emotional rows so we can avoid them. Once we see things straight, our feelings will come straight, too.

So let's get rid of all emotional ideas that distort our outlook and repulse other people. Let's have confidence in our own individual worth so that we expect and prepare for happy relations with other people. One's attitude is half the battle: A happy attitude invites happiness, just as an attitude of success attracts success.

"This is all very well," you may say, "but what about all the mean, inconsiderate people you see in high places?" First, there aren't many. False impressions growing out of gossip, and suspicion give some a bad reputation they do not deserve. Men in high places are besieged on all sides for favors or concessions that they have to refuse. This refusal causes much of the criticism and resentment against them.

Most of the few men who are really inconsiderate of others are holdovers from a rough-and-tumble era. Often they themselves were handled by the old type of bosses who tried to

break their subordinates like horses. A few have gotten where they are by accident. Social and business ethics and manners do not advance on an even front; there are always throwbacks.

As in nature, the few variations from the general rule are eventually eliminated. Brutal and greedy men finally defeat themselves by their own philosophy regarding their fellow men. They are overwhelmed by the powerful influences they set in motion against themselves. "Friend is but a name," said Napoleon, the apostle of force; "I love no one." Despite extraordinary talent, vision, and vast energy, he ended in lonely exile. "Live by the sword, die by the sword." Hitler turned the whole world against himself by his contempt for the dignity of the individual man and went down to a terrible end. The seeds for his defeat were sown in "Mein Kampf," and the horrors of Dachau, Buchenwald, and Lidice foretold the horror of Hitler's own death. Likewise, in everyday life the town bully or the ordinary tough guy is very heartily disliked and, therefore, very unhappy. What success he may have eventually turns to ashes and wormwood.

"All right," you agree. "Let's admit that the mean, inconsiderate acts finally catch up with the person who commits them. But doesn't making an effort to get people to like you seem pretty artificial? I detest yes men, smoothies, apple polishers, and professional backslappers."

Most people want no truck with flatterers and such self-seekers. But honest efforts to get along with people, are the essentials of successful living.

The great scientists, historians, and philosophers agree on this, that life on this earth always has been and is one continuous, never-ceasing process of readjustment.

In the long process of evolution, those forms of life which could not or did not adjust to changing environment were ruthlessly cut down by nature and disappeared from the face of the earth.

In human life the continuous readjustment is to other people. This is vital to existence. There is nothing more important.

Therefore, does it not make sense to say that each human being who wants to survive should be an expert in readjusting? Should he not be adaptable, flexible, fluent in the stream of life? Shouldn't he be a specialist in accommodating himself to others; in gearing in his aims and interests with the thoughts, desires, needs, and actions of other people?

No one need feel that it is insincere to make a conscious effort to improve his human relations. On the contrary, he should be ashamed if he doesn't. Self-training is one of the outstanding attributes of the civilized man.

The farmer does not leave it to his crop to come up naturally—he cultivates it. He seeks to improve methods of cultivation. Teachers constantly seek new and better methods of imparting information. Statesmen constantly revise laws to make them better. Mechanical genius is constantly inventing new and better automobiles, radios, cook stoves. We all take care of the body by eating better food and exercising to improve it. We especially encourage our children to do likewise. And far deeper in the human being than is manifest by any of these physical, material things—in the very heart of man—is the urge to improve, to improve himself, his children, and the race. First came his effort to improve his physical environment, then to improve intellectually, and finally to improve emotionally and spiritually. The proposals set forth in this book are based on *the highest aspirations of the human race, the struggle upward, to improve.*

It is a fact that failure to adapt oneself to people and environment is the cause of many mental disorders and most unhappiness.

But what we are talking about here is the very simple, homely principle that a person should "use his head to save his back." To so act toward other people that they will respond

in a way that will make life easier for him. We can depend on it: People will pay us back.

Regardless of age, any intelligent person with the desire to, can improve his human relations. Experience of industry in the Second World War proved that middle-aged, even old people, can learn new skills and learn them easily, in some respects more easily than youngsters. Mental power, psychologists say, does not decline from its high level at twenty-five to thirty years of age as a person grows older.

In building skill in human relations, the older person has to supplant habits that have been longer established than in the case of young people. But the main consideration is to see the benefits, to have the desire. So the older person has the advantage, because, as a rule, a person has to have a considerable amount of hard human experience before he realizes that his relations with other people govern his own life.

The older person in learning to adapt himself to other people helps to keep himself young and flexible in mind and spirit, thus lessening nervous strain and adding to his happiness and feeling of well-being. Change keeps us young. Rejection of change and growth means decay.

"Most arts require long study and application," said Lord Chesterfield, "but the most useful art of all, that of pleasing, requires only the desire."

The unforgivable sin in human relations is failure to try to improve.

At this point we may note these facts that may help us to understand people:

1. Personal vanity prevents many people from adapting themselves to others.
2. Effort to make oneself seem important by belittling others always fails.
3. The tragic fact is that people do not always act in their own best interests.

4. The reasoning part of the brain must control the emotions.
5. Violent and unnecessary disputes are often started by the first person who unintentionally raises his voice or commands another person.
6. The person who is confident of his own personal worth is seldom insulted.
7. People like Hitler, or the town bully, who believe in beating people down defeat themselves by their own philosophy.
8. Nature destroys all forms of life that fail to adjust themselves to conditions. To survive, every human being must continually readjust himself to his environment. That means, to other people.
9. Older people can improve their methods of dealing with people. This helps to keep them young.
10. The unforgivable sin in human relations is failure to try to improve.

CHAPTER THREE

The Importance of Being Important, and the Basic Rule

In a Midwestern town, a half dozen years before the Second World War, the most popular and talented college athlete married a beautiful and efficient nurse. Great publicity accompanied the union of these two outstanding people.

As the years passed, the husband's real-estate business prospered, and he became a recognized leader in his field. He provided his wife with every comfort and many luxuries. He asked nothing in return; neither did he ask her advice or her help in any matter. He was the typical vigorous, self-sufficient business executive.

One night he returned from a meeting to find his wife gone. She left a letter saying she was going to live with old-time friends and intended to sue for divorce. The husband was dumbfounded. But it turned out the wife meant exactly what she said.

After the divorce she married another man. The other man was an invalid.

This woman's life as a nurse had been planned and directed toward helping the sick. She felt the need of having people depend on her; but instead, her husband had placed her in the position of being dependent upon him, of living in the reflec-

tion of his importance. She felt she had ceased to exist as an individual, that she was not appreciated for her own personal worth, and she found the situation intolerable. Finally, she found satisfaction in her attachment to a man who was an invalid, who needed her.

It is a simple fact that people will go far to get appreciation, to satisfy their craving to be important to and needed by someone.

Let's get down to fundamentals: What are people like, anyhow?

The basic fact is: *Each person is the center of his own universe.*

That's true of every person we know. And the implication it holds that every person is necessarily self-centered, in actual fact, is true, too.

Of course we all know people who are generous and self-sacrificing. They live for other people—not only for their children but for other youngsters, for the sick, helpless, and needy. They sacrifice not only luxuries, but ordinary comforts, for other people. They are completely selfless.

Such wonderful people, whom we love and admire, are not self-centered in the ordinary usage of the word. But the reason they do for others is that they obtain greater happiness in doing for others than for themselves. Most of such people do these things for others naturally, unconsciously, but they do so because it brings them satisfaction.

People are self-centered by nature.

They can't help it. No one can help it. It's a fact to be understood, to be accepted, that a person is interested in things only as they relate to himself.

People want to be recognized. Even your loving mother, your devoted wife, your most generous friend, want most keenly to be recognized, not taken for granted. Just think about yourself and you will see how true that is.

William James, the Harvard psychologist, declared, “. . . *the deepest principle of human nature is the desire to be appreciated.*”

Now, this is an emotional matter, and to illustrate just how delicate and keen such emotional matters are, let's take this story, told by a member of a conference on human relations, about his home-town baseball team.

A few years ago this team was leading the league by seventeen games. A certain player, formerly hero of World Series fame whom we shall call Jimmy Jones, was the outstanding star. The team's lead seemed safe, since the season was more than half over. The people of this middle-sized community were jubilant: never before had they been in so favored a spot in the baseball world.

They arranged a “Jimmy Jones Night” to pay homage to the man who had brought them so much glory. The good citizens of the town responded in style. They came to the baseball park that night loaded with gifts for Jones, among them an automobile, golf clubs, shotguns, fishing tackle, and a bird dog.

But the citizenry forgot the other players who were contributing to the team's success. They failed to realize that each person feels a deep need for appreciation as an individual.

Beginning that night, the players failed to respond in the usual form. Their spirit, their enthusiasm, their old “zing” were gone. The team lost that game and continued to lose games in the few remaining weeks, so that it finally wound up in third place.

Sometimes when we think of the little bits of personal recognition we withhold from other people—recognition that costs us nothing but means so much to others—we may well feel ashamed. Here is a little story carried by Reuters news agency and published in several American newspapers in December, 1946. It is typical of how deeply such acts of kindness may be appreciated:

A SMILE BRINGS DUTCH GIRL \$40,000

Groningen, Holland, Dec. 4 (Reuters)—The newspaper *Dagblad* said today a farmer who lived three years ago at the Drenthe village of Ide was so disfigured of face that neighbors shunned him. Of all the faces he saw, just one, a girl's, had a friendly smile. He has died and left the girl \$40,000.

In the very earliest periods of human life people demand recognition. Babies cry for it. This craving continues through life. So strong is it that people will often do things to gain attention that are not in keeping with good judgment and common sense. To take a homely example, think of the people who tell all the details of their operations—in spite of the fact they must know the listeners are bored or perhaps repulsed by what they hear.

The desire to be recognized, to be important, is no superficial thing. It is one of the basic human drives. Men have fought duels or killed other men because of it. It is the cause of jealousy. Women have left their husbands, have had nervous breakdowns, become invalids because of it. The files of psychiatrists are filled with such cases. It has caused clash and progress. It has caused wars. It has caused people to drive ahead to individual achievement. It has built our civilization and economic progress. It is a drive within ourselves—and other people—that we have to work with, adapt ourselves to, or seek to control.

Ben Hecht, in his philosophical "A Guide for the Bedeviled," says with passion and rare insight:

"God knows what the Ego is—and so do I. The Ego is a ferocity for identification that exists in all of us. Deeper than our lusts and all our other good and bad hungers, is this obsession we have to be Some One. . . . We clamor to acquire a meaning, to participate, however humbly, in the world of

ideas and events; to hold opinions that will make us significant; to lift ourselves out of a herd-loneliness that eternally engulfs us." *

People want companionship. They want to join with their fellow men, to be recognized as belonging, to feel that they are "on the team." This is supported by the industrial studies of Elton Mayo, formerly Professor of Industrial Research at Harvard, going so far as to indicate that "the desire to stand well with one's fellows, the so-called human instinct of association, easily outweighs merely individual interest and logic of reasoning." † It is also this deep urge "to belong" with other people that leads people to join lodges, clubs, societies, often churches. This is a way by which a person may gain individual recognition through identification with a group.

Back of it, too, is the human desire for a feeling of security. Thus, children need to be handled by their parents in a way that gives them a feeling of belonging to the family; a sense of contributing to the family and of having the family's support and protection. The urge to join with other people goes back to the very beginnings of the race when belonging to the clan was vital protection against physical dangers of war, enemies, wild beasts, or the elements. The development of civilization has increased rather than decreased the urgent desire and need of the individual to be recognized individually and as belonging to a group.

It is plain that the first approach to good human relations is to see clearly that the craving of people for personal recognition and their desire to join with other human beings are deep and fundamental needs. The second vital step is to realize that our attitude toward other people is the most powerful influ-

* Reprinted from "A Guide for the Bedeviled" by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.

† Reprinted from "The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization" by permission of Division of Research, Harvard Business School.

ence we can bring into play in controlling their attitude toward us.

It takes some self-restraint to recognize the importance of the other person instead of acting to get our own importance recognized. But it develops strength of character in us. As to the other fellow: it makes him feel good, it opens his mind to our opinions, and it makes for cooperation—good, easy human relations.

“But,” you may object, “aren’t efforts to make people feel important obviously insincere?”

Not necessarily; not if what you say to them is true. You can find a good quality in anyone. Look for it and recognize it. Wendell White, in his “Psychology in Living,” gives ample justification for such efforts. He says:

“To put at ease those whom we excel in certain traits, especially persons with whom we are constantly associated, we must concede their superiority in other traits; we must live the attitude, *‘I never met a person that wasn’t superior to me in some respect.’*” *

Here’s an example of how the rule worked in reverse; what may happen when you do something to make people feel *unimportant*:

An advertising agency was soliciting the account of one of California’s largest wineries. It was a big account, greatly desired. The agency took its exhibits and principal executives out to the winery headquarters for a meeting with its chief officers. The agency had every reason to expect to get the business.

During the sales talk a man in overalls in the back of the room asked a question. The agency executive then holding forth gave the man a cold look, ignored his question. The man in overalls said nothing. It turned out he was a principal officer

* Reprinted from “Psychology in Living” by permission of the Macmillan Company, publishers. Copyright 1944 and 1947 by Wendell White.

with a controlling voice in the affairs of the winery. He had been made to appear unimportant. The agency failed to get the contract.

Some say, mistakenly, "Make people feel important." But that is a selfish move and it may backfire. Let's say, "Just recognize the other person, his importance as an individual—and he will repay you manyfold."

With these facts in mind, we come to the basic rule for dealing with people to get them to respond as we desire:

Think, act, and speak in terms of the other person's interests.

By adopting this rule one does not give up his own interests; he advances them. Consciously or unconsciously the master salesman always thinks, acts, and speaks in terms of the other person's interests. He always sells in terms of what the product will do for his customer. The leaders in business and the professions are guided by the same rule.

Now it may appear that we are suggesting two opposite courses of action: one to be considerate of others and the other to seek our own self-interest.

It may seem a little confusing, at first, but we are talking about a philosophy not only of "live and let live," but of helping yourself by helping the other fellow. It is a mutual-benefit principle. Another way of saying it is "Seek what you want within the framework of what others want and think." *This philosophy holds that there need be no irreconcilable conflict of interests between buyer and seller, employer and employee, nor between the sexes.* You don't necessarily have to obtain something by taking it away from another. It's not unlike the advice Edward L. Bernays, the public relations counselor, gives businessmen: "Find a coincidence of your private interest with the public interest." It's the spirit of teamwork, of cooperation, of finding areas of common good with other people.

More positively, it is the principle that you get back what you give *with interest*; also, as in giving love, the more you

give, the more you have. It is the principle of the golden rule and that, in a material as well as a spiritual way, it is more blessed to give than to receive.

The socially successful always think, speak, and act in terms of others' interests. Think of the most agreeable person you know. Why is he the most agreeable? We'll gamble that it's because he is interested in you, your family, your hobbies, the things you do.

By contrast with those who believe in working *with* people, Dr. Alfred Adler points out, "The individual who is not interested in his fellow men has the greatest difficulties in life and provides the greatest injury to others."

In considering the three basic drives of human beings—for survival, for reproduction, and for personal recognition—this should be noted: While these are so common to all mankind that the exceptions, if any, need not be considered, yet we should realize that in character and personality each individual is different from all the rest. This is due to the fact that each person is the product (1) of hereditary influences that go back to millions of ancestors and (2) of environment that is unique in the case of any given person, even one twin being subject to certain influences that the other does not experience.

So the practical point is that, people are different. They should be studied individually and treated as individuals according to their peculiar traits and viewpoints.

You can win other people by being interested in them as individuals. How people of high or low estate respond to personal recognition is illustrated by this incident:

Some years ago, seated alone in the diner of an eastbound train was A. R. Bishop, prominent automobile company executive. He was returning to Detroit after having completed his first visit to the West coast in four years.

The dining-car waiter assigned to his table glanced at him, then retired briefly to the kitchen. A few moments later he

reappeared, smiled, and said, "It's good to have you back with us, Mr. Bishop. Would you like another T-bone steak, medium rare?"

Bishop was momentarily flabbergasted. Then he stood up, shook hands with the waiter, and thanked him for remembering his name and preference. After the meal he left a dollar tip.

The waiter was Joe Seldon, who is neither a magician nor a long-distance memory expert. Joe Seldon merely realized the value of remembering people's names and developed a system to help him. Out in the kitchen he has a small card file with the names, facial characteristics, and food preferences of the outstanding people he has served.

Let us repeat this fact, it is important: Making it a habit to think, act, and speak in terms of the other person's interests does not mean that we give up our own personalities or lessen our personal stature. Through this habit we add personal strength and the respect of other people.

Adoption of the rule of thinking, speaking, and acting in terms of others' interests does mean that we abandon the dog-eat-dog philosophy of life. It means we abandon the theory that we can gain only at the expense of other people. It means positively that we believe through cooperative attitudes and actions we can advance our own interests while we advance those of other people.

Benjamin Franklin, one of the wisest of men, said, "*I early found that when I worked for myself alone, myself alone worked for me; but when I worked also for others, others worked also for me.*"

If, as we believe you will agree, people make or break us, we ought to make consideration of other human beings the first order of business every day.

Obviously, too few people have done that. That's the reason there are so many unhappy, frustrated individuals in the world, so much clash and conflict everywhere among groups, races,

and nations. Humankind has made great progress in new machines and inventions of every sort in recent years, but little progress in human relations.

It is a sad fact that people do not always act in their own best interests. Progress depends on thinking out the long-time good; sacrificing immediate impulsive action. Savages stuff themselves like wolves; but civilized man, remembering past mistakes, stores up food for the future. Yet civilized man has thus far largely concentrated his thinking on things and has hardly begun to understand his past mistakes in dealing with other men so that he may take corrective action. Garrett Mattingly, head of the Division of Social Philosophy at Cooper Union, declares that the "medieval" state of human relations threatens the whole world with catastrophe.

It is easy to see that in a cooperative civilization such as ours people *must* work together. They must give due consideration to others' desires, rights, and needs. But this cooperative spirit has to begin with individuals. Except for that consideration this is not a book on social progress. It is offered as a practical, very personal guide for the individual, affecting his daily job, his human contacts. It is offered as a guide to new helpful *habits* in getting along with people.

The habit of thinking, speaking, and acting in terms of others' interests is easy to acquire; and it must be a habit. You establish a habit by doing it again and again. Think constantly of the other person. In pursuing our own aims, let's act and speak in terms of the other person's interests. Let's practice it. If we establish the habit, more of the good things of life—happiness and influence—will be ours as the new habit grows.

On the other hand, we must remember that man is a combative animal. Sometimes people are criminal, you can't appease them. If you compromise, they move in on you, destroy you. Sometimes a man has to fight in self-defense. There's quite a bit about this in the next chapter.

PEOPLE AND YOU

om the discussion thus far, these basic truths begin to
ge:

Each person is the center of his own universe.

People have three basic drives: to survive, to reproduce,
to be recognized as individuals.

William James: "The deepest principle of human nature
is the desire to be appreciated."

People want to join with their fellow men, to be identi-
fied with a group.

Basic rule: Think, act, and speak in terms of the other
person's interests.

There need be no irreconcilable conflict between buyer
and seller, employee and employer, or between the sexes.

Recognize the interests of others, and work out your
destiny within the framework of their needs and desires.

Benjamin Franklin: "When I worked for myself alone,
myself alone worked for me; but when I worked also for
others, others worked also for me."

CHAPTER FOUR

How to Keep from Hating People

An elderly man, of the hard-shell philosopher type, who knows about human nature, operates a filling station outside of San Francisco. A friend tells this story about him.

A motorist stopped at his place one morning and inquired about a resort up the Redwood Highway.

"I've been at Santa Cruz for the past two weeks," the motorist said. "Had a wonderful time there—nice people and a nice place."

The gas-station operator told him that he would like the people at the resort up the highway.

An hour or so later another man came by inquiring about the same Redwood Highway resort. He complained that thus far on his trip he had "had a terrible two weeks," inhospitable people and poor accommodations.

"You won't like it up there," the station operator told the second motorist.

As the second motorist drove on our friend asked the operator why he had changed his attitude so quickly about the Redwood Highway resort.

"I ain't changed my attitude," he replied. "I just was sure neither one of them fellers would change their attitudes. The

first one liked the people and the places he'd been. So it was a sure thing he'd like it where he was going. The second feller was a griper; he'd have a poor time wherever he went. Having a good time with people is a habit, son."

The first step toward getting along with people is to build the habit of looking for their good qualities. If you look, you will find them.

Or vice versa. One can easily fall into the tragic, self-defeating habit of disliking people, by thinking of and looking for only the mean, small, despicable qualities in humankind; by thinking of people as being greedy or bestial, or cheats, liars, flatterers, or whatnot.

One can look on even the most disagreeable people with considerable tolerance if one realizes the fact that these people are unfortunates whose personalities have been distorted by bad handling, usually early in life. Dominating or neglectful parents, family disgrace or humiliation, nagging or childhood-spoiling may so affect people as to make them overbearing or give them inferiority complexes; may make them liars, or show-offs, or malicious gossips.

We ought to try, at least, to understand these people. There is no good purpose to be served by trying to punish them, for they do not realize why they do what they do. If we cannot bring ourselves to help them, we can at least avoid them.

One of Dostoevski's characters said that to love people you have to hold your nose and shut your eyes; but love them you must.

Liking or disliking people is a matter of personal habit or outlook, of personal philosophy.

Think how wise humankind has been in developing manners and customs in life that cover up, idealize, or glamorize physical functions of human beings. Consider, for a moment, the function of eating. Surely not naturally a pretty process—the tak-

ing in of food, chewing it, mixing it with saliva, and swallowing. But over centuries, as man grew more civilized, he adopted manners that made eating a most agreeable custom. Suitable tools and vessels—knives, forks and spoons, glassware, china plates and cups—were developed, as were tablecloths and napkins. Table manners grew. Flowers came to be used for special occasions. The art of showing consideration for others became a ritual at the table. So, by glorifying certain aspects of eating food and ignoring others, dining became one of the most delightful of social forms.

Doctors and nurses are called upon to perform many acts that would be distasteful to the average person. Yet, by keeping their minds on the good they do and holding to a scientific attitude, doctors and nurses receive deep satisfaction from their work. And their professions are among the most honored.

The physical acts involved in bringing a new life into the world would doubtless seem ugly, without the beauty and appeal of romantic love and the treasured ideals of motherhood. Through song and story we have built these up into the most cherished of human relationships.

So it may be seen that the human race has found practical and helpful ways for the individual to adjust his attitudes toward certain basic physical human functions.

Far less progress has been made in human relations on the mental and emotional levels. Any one of us can consciously cultivate the habit of tolerating and liking our fellow human beings. Beyond pleasant manners, a person may consciously act in a way that will offset unpleasant aspects of human nature.

An officer of a large industrial company had a position that required him to work in other departments of the organization. Usually this causes friction and resentment and is often considered meddling. But this man got along well with everyone. He won a high place in the organization in spite of many de-

ficiencies, including the lack of even primary school education.

"How do you do it?" he was asked.

"The first thing is," he replied "my intentions toward everyone are good. I know if anyone dislikes or hates me it is because he doesn't really know me or understand my intentions. I make it a rule to remedy that, to get to know the person. Furthermore, *whenever I hear someone has said something critical about me, I find a way to do that person a favor.*"

The odd fact about the doing of a good deed is that it works both ways. The receiver of the favor naturally is favorably inclined toward the person who has done him a good turn. But, also, the doer of the good deed is favorably inclined toward the one he has helped. He feels that he has an investment in the other person, an investment of good will.

What is suggested here is a philosophy of intelligent self-interest combined with the practical ideal of adding to the other person's happiness. While we should keep our eyes open and protect our own interests, we shouldn't, on the other hand, get soured on human nature because an occasional person is bad or some aspect of human nature is distasteful.

We have to understand people.

Each person has infinite capacity for good or ill. His traits may have been transmitted through the chromosomes and genes of millions of ancestors. His traits may have been acquired by a variety of environments—by the way he was handled by parents, teachers, bosses, and friends. Early experiences actually live in our bodies. They lurk in the interbrain, below the level of consciousness. Our emotional habits are always ready to trip us up unless we understand and control them. The result is that we often act, unknowingly, against our own best interests.

People who are self-centered, thoughtless, and greedy in their relations with others, are that way because of previous conditioning and because they are ignorant both of the origin

of their own emotions and of how others react against them.

There is no point in hating and fighting such people. Most of them will respond to unruffled good nature and a sustained, genuine desire to help them.

"But some such people are just too tough," you may say. "What if they never respond?"

There are such cases, of course. Ordinarily, a person can avoid such people or avoid controversy. That is the best course. On *very* rare occasions we may meet a really vicious person who ruthlessly forces the issue. If then we must fight, let's not nip or nag or go faltering against them, like "old Nicias faltering against Syracuse." Let's attract allies by our fairness; move right in and go for the knockout. There are extraordinary cases where it is necessary to fight.

Having said that, let's add at once an urgent appeal to common sense, because so many people are far too much inclined to fight—win, lose, or draw. Not long ago we mentioned in a conversation that Christ drove the money-changers from the temple. The spunky, little lady to whom we were talking replied with great enthusiasm, "I sometimes think it's the finest thing He ever did." She meant no irreverence, but the point was obvious. People have an unreasonable and unconscious yen for combat. So let's get down to plain horse sense:

Let's not fight just to indulge our vanity or to enjoy the brief excitement of it. If we are not sure that we can put the other fellow out of commission completely and permanently, we'd better not start. He may pick himself up from a partial defeat, dust himself off, and flatten us out. Let's think it through coolly in advance. What specifically are we going to gain, selfishly, if we do win? Of course, we are not talking about physical fighting. Most of us have progressed beyond that. But, as to verbal fighting, the pressing of our interests, ideas, and influence directly and offensively against another person, let's think calmly before we start. Any person, however pugnacious by

nature, should be able to go through an entire adult lifetime without the necessity of engaging any other person in direct, personal conflict. Skill in avoiding conflict, in itself, demonstrates the superiority, the superior control, strategy, and confidence of the non-fighter, as we illustrate many times in the course of this book.

At the very least, violent conflict with another person is likely to lose us the possibility he may some day become our friend and ally. Let's beware of building up influences that work against us.

Learning to like people by looking for the good in them eliminates any habits of complaining or criticizing we may have. This is important, for if we complain often, say about our associates or the outfits we work for, people are apt to think the trouble lies with us. Everybody knows that everybody has problems; but it's part of the job, a part of life, to meet and solve such problems, not cry about them.

Haven't you noticed that people dislike and avoid a person who habitually criticizes others, who imputes the worst motives to others? The reason is that, consciously or not, the observer thinks the person with a low opinion of human nature is judging from his knowledge of himself, the person he knows best. "Judge not lest ye be judged." A critic attracts criticism to himself.

Some people, not infrequently the young or immature, think a cynical viewpoint indicates sophistication, worldly wisdom. Such an attitude is costly to the person who holds it. It makes happiness impossible. We live in a world of people and, *if we don't like people, life itself will not be to our liking*. Life is intolerable in a world of cold-blooded self-seekers. Cynical people are not cynical because other people have failed them; they are cynical because they have failed to help other people without expectation of reward.

With good works we build our faith in human nature. We

mean real faith that expects and develops good instead of bad. Do you recall the story of the woman who heard that "faith moves mountains"? Well, she had a mountain she could see from her back window. One night when she thought she had steamed up enough faith, she prayed long and hard for the mountain to be moved. Next morning she looked out her window. "Just as I expected," she exclaimed, "there it is!"

We do not mean faith in defeat. An encouraging aspect of man is that, when a crisis or emergency forces him to show his true colors, the true colors are not so bad. A friend recently told the story of the people in a backwoods village who, in the course of their humdrum lives, fell into habits of gossip, backbiting, and otherwise demonstrated the meaner and less pleasant human qualities. However, when a great fire swept in, not only did the better persons of the village help the meaner ones, but some (not all) of the most ignoble characters of the town rose to great heights of self-sacrifice in their efforts to rescue others. Human nature seldom looks so good as when it is put to a great test.

We must have tolerance, too. Friendship is based on tolerance. A friend, it has been said, is a person who knows all about you—and likes you anyway! What a boon, what a comfort, what a sustaining influence is such a one "who likes you anyway!" We are all full of human frailties, all make mistakes, some embarrassing, some really grave; so we all need that friend who forgets the bad and appreciates the good in us.

But how to acquire such a friend? The answer is in another time-tested saying, "To have a friend, be one." And we mean by "friend" one who knows all about us, and likes us anyway! People will like you and help you if you like them and help them.

Tolerance means we should not expect too much of other people. One of the commonest mistakes is expecting people to be reasonable. Yet few if any people will always be reason-

able from our standpoint. To put it another way, our viewpoint will not always seem reasonable to other people. We will save ourselves many disappointments if we *do not expect people to be reasonable.*

One way to learn to like people is to cultivate the habit of telling them the good things we may hear about them. It is quite as blessed to give as to receive a good word.

The late Will Rogers often said, "I never met a man I didn't like." Everyone loved Will Rogers. It is true, we can find something to like in every person we meet if that's what we look for.

Recently on a daytime train from Los Angeles to San Francisco, we sat next to a very old man. Our first impression was negative; we expected to have to listen to ailments and complaints. On the contrary, we found a man of rare humor and optimistic outlook. Among several significant stories he told was one about a missionary in India. One day the missionary met a government official. The official asked him what he did for a living. The missionary told him that during the thirty years he had been in India he had converted five thousand people to Christianity. The official said that he had lived in India for thirty years and had never met a Christian. The missionary said, "What kind of work do you do?" The official said, "I look after His Majesty's affairs, and also hunt big game. I have killed hundreds of tigers." Whereupon the missionary replied, "During my thirty years in India, I have never seen a tiger."

One man was looking for vicious tigers—and he found them. The other was looking for an opportunity to help people—and he found it. Neither saw what the other looked for.

We find what we look for in people. And it is important that we look for the good in them, because we live in a world of people. They make or break us.

People are full of human fallibilities—every one of us. If we

are tolerant of other people's mistakes, they will overlook our mistakes. People are also full of admirable qualities. If we look for such qualities in others, people will look for and find good qualities in us.

To make life worth living, we must keep our faith in human nature.

Learning to like people instead of hating them may be made a pleasant habit and here, summarized, are a few suggestions that may help:

1. If we look for good qualities in people, we shall find them.
2. If we look for bad qualities, we shall find them, too.
3. We can look with tolerance upon people if we realize that they often acquire unpleasant traits through unfortunate early environment.
4. Civilized people have been able to glamorize their unattractive physical functions.
5. Progress is needed on the mental and emotional levels in human relationships.
6. You may win the good will of a person who fails to understand you and your good intentions by doing him a favor.
7. If you think you have to fight a really vicious person, don't start unless you are sure you can win a complete victory.
8. Any person should be able to go through an adult lifetime without violent controversy with another.
9. If we express a low opinion of human nature, people are apt to think we judge by knowledge of ourselves.
10. If we don't like people, we will not like life.
11. "To have a friend, be one." A friend is one who knows all about you and likes you anyway!

CHAPTER FIVE

People Will Pay You Back

People will pay money for courtesy. In cases where this cannot be done, they will go out of their way to reward the considerate person in some manner. On the other hand, people will try to punish those who are discourteous to them. Let's bear in mind, then, that whether for good treatment or bad treatment, people will pay us back.

These facts are pretty obvious; but the trouble is that no one, not even the most habitually discourteous person, thinks he is discourteous.

An amusing example of this occurred in a recent human-relations conference of the junior officers of a large business firm. Before the meeting several of the men told the conference leader about Gerald McCoy, a member of the group. They considered him discourteous and difficult to deal with. They asked the conference leader, therefore, to bring out the aspects of courtesy in personal dealings within a company. At the end of the meeting McCoy congratulated the leader with evident sincerity, saying the principles set forth had long been his private philosophy and he hoped *other members* of the conference would accept these helpful thoughts and mend their ways.

It is difficult to get the other person's viewpoint, to see ourselves as others see us. It is a fact, in the most literal sense, that

we don't see things the same way. Nor smell, taste, nor hear alike. There are great or little differences in all these five senses. This fact has caused philosophers and psychologists no end of trouble in laying down general theories. It should lead us to be tolerant, to consider what may be the other's viewpoint, even though it differs widely from our own. Also, in the background must be the thought that, incredible as it may seem, perhaps the other fellow is right and we are wrong!

If you've ever questioned a person on the spot when he's been flagrantly discourteous, has he not always set out at once emphatically to show why his act was fully justified? Surely at one time or another all of us have remonstrated with someone for an unkind word or act. Hasn't the reaction always been a defense?

Thinking of this, may we not get a glimmer of the disturbing thought that we ourselves may occasionally, even frequently, be discourteous?

It may be a little, unsuspected habit, an unfortunate mannerism, a lack of tact. Tact is an "intuitive appreciation of what is fit, proper, or right; a fine or ready discernment shown in saying or doing the right thing; skill in dealing with men." Further, it is defined as "the sense of touch." It is the essence of the human touch. Here's a case where that "magic touch in human relations" was lacking:

There was a business executive whose manners were good. He was pleasant to his visitors, usually spoke cordially to the office people. But he had a habit of tossing back across the table papers handed him by his associates who had come to consult him, with a manner and facial expression of disdain. He meant nothing personal in this. He didn't realize what he was doing. Yet the associates felt that they'd been treated with contempt. This generated antagonism and brought into play influences that worked seriously against this able executive.

As Max Levine, head of the Foley Brothers Department

Store in Houston, Texas, notes: "*We know men of great capacity who fail because they haven't learned to get along with their fellow workers.*"

Tact is allied to courtesy, but its quality is more subtle. The tactful person will do nothing that even implies a thought that would embarrass another. If another person, for instance, makes an error in pronunciation or grammar, the tactful one will not pointedly thereafter use the correct word or phrase or pronunciation.

Tact runs along with good sportsmanship. If there is some doubt in a game of tennis about the decision of a line judge in calling a ball "out," the benefiting player often purposely knocks the next ball out of bounds so as to be more than fair to his opponent.

There's the case of a guest on a dining car running out of Los Angeles who found his waiter, Carl F. Watson, to have just such a tactful sense of good sportsmanship:

The passenger, looking over the menu, noted both chicken salad and chicken sandwich. He decided on chicken sandwich, but absent-mindedly he wrote "chicken salad" on the order slip.

When Watson brought the salad, the customer angrily protested.

Most waiters and stewards immediately pick up the order slip in such cases and show the customer where he's wrong. This waiter didn't. He immediately expressed regret, took away the salad, and brought back the sandwich. Meanwhile the customer picked up the order slip. When he found the mistake was his, he apologized and offered to pay for both the salad and the sandwich.

The waiter's response was "No, sir. That's perfectly all right. I just hope you'll pardon me for being right." The passenger laughed and left a generous tip.

Here's an amusing story in *The Reader's Digest*, condensed

from *Cosmopolitan*, illustrating the definition of tact as "fine, ready discernment in saying and doing the right thing":

"The young wife of a Hollywood lawyer is a friend of Ingrid Bergman. So when Miss Bergman had some tax problem, her friend brought her to the husband's office. Later the lawyer said to his new office boy, 'Know who that was my wife brought in?'

" 'No, sir, who?'

" 'That, Son, was Ingrid Bergman!'

" 'Gee, Mr. Burlap! Which one was Bergman?'

"The lawyer gazed pensively at his office boy. 'Here George,' he said. 'Here is a dollar you've just earned. Not that I think you are going to need it. But I would appreciate your throwing a little business my way in a year or two, after you've become rich and famous.' "

There is no appeal to reason or the mind in courteous or tactful actions; they affect only the emotions. *But people are governed almost entirely by their emotions.*

Another principle, grounded directly on emotions: "Be sympathetic and understanding." Not only in listening to what a person may say, but in every way show kindly interest in the other person. *Give sympathy; don't seek it.*

The sympathetic person appears like a ministering angel. As to the unsympathetic person, recall Walt Whitman's fearsome warning: "He who walks a furlong without sympathy walks to his own funeral carrying his shroud."

This advice, from experienced sales and service people, applies to social as well as business life: "Treat formal people formally, avoiding familiarity with people whom you do not know well." We have to be sensitive to people; we must realize that people are "different."

One man will like you to call him by his first name the first time you meet. Another will take offense. The safe course is to let the other person break down the conventional barrier first.

A friend of ours recalls with chagrin an instance of unmeant familiarity. He was trying to sell a service to a very large company. A top officer of the company was the key man. The deal was going all right until our hero dropped in to see this officer late one afternoon and said breezily, "I came in late in the day, thinking your resistance might be low." The company officer was over middle age and rather fragile. This well-intended pleasantry hit him in a sore spot, as he was worried about his health. He winced and closed up. Untimely familiarity lost the chance for a large contract.

We asked hundreds of individuals to list things the courteous person should do. Their replies might be grouped under this homely general principle: *Be considerate of others in little things*. This general rule includes lots of everyday practices: Using a friendly voice on the telephone; waiting a second to let the other fellow hang up first when the conversation is finished; saying "thank you" when people do a little favor, such as letting you pass first; always saying "thank you" when you complete a sale, however small. Such good manners over a period of time build up into a great influence.

A salesman may be very busy when a customer approaches and may have to keep him waiting. Ignoring the customer completely may be regarded by him as a discourteous act. So little is required to avoid this affront—just a nod, a wave of the hand, or a smile of recognition, if possible a few words, "I'll be with you in a moment."

What you, yourself, get out of being courteous—and you get it quickly—is a feeling of personal well-being, a glow of inner satisfaction. A courteous act makes you feel better, right away. If you ever helped a blind man across the street, or picked up a wind-blown hat, or said a pleasant word to the garbage man, you experienced the first reward.

For a second reward, the habit of courtesy makes the day's work easier.

Walter S. Gifford, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, points out how the habit of courtesy builds character and increases "likableness of the individual and the satisfaction and pleasure he gets from his job."

As store manager of William Filene's Sons Company in Boston, Laurence S. Bitner was fond of saying, "Smiles beget smiles, and good manners induce a friendly feeling on the part of both customers and fellow employees. After all, if one has to work, why not have fun doing it?"

To some people the first reward is enough. And people in business can easily make personal tests to find the second reward.

If immediate money reward is the issue, we have to go to specific instances in fields where tips are usually given. Here's an example:

Wellington B. Phillips is a Western railroad dining-car waiter who has been waiting on tables for some seventeen years, on and off the railroad. Shortly after completing a human-relations conference course he told the conference leader, "I made \$4 more in tips on my last run from Oakland to Ogden than I've ever made on any trip before. I did it just by applying some of that courtesy we talked about, and it sure worked."

Phillips averaged about twelve runs a month. He figured it out for a year, and it came to \$576. In his seventeen years of service, he estimated, he could have made \$9,792 more, just by applying the principles of making people like him.

Now, let's have the opinions of some of America's business leaders, the men who pay the money or make the promotions:

Executives polled by *Fortune Magazine* in October, 1946, placed "ability to handle people" above ability to make decisions, technical knowledge, or any other personal quality contributing to their own personal success.

John D. Rockefeller, Sr., once said, "*I will pay more for the*

ability to deal with people than for any other under the sun."

And Henry Ford, "*If there is any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view and see things from his angle as well as your own.*"

There is no better way for you to bring yourself favorably to the attention of your supervising officers than to have customers like you, commend you. Business is built on the foundation of satisfied customers. In large part, this involves the personal service that goes to the individual customer. One firm or company does not do business with another firm or company—each transaction, at wholesale even, is between an individual in one organization and an individual in the other. Every sale, or item of business, funnels in through a vital personal contact of individuals. All the instincts, desires, personal whims, prejudices, vanities, egoisms that the human being is heir to are involved. The sales or service man who has acquired the knack of pleasing customers has started on the road toward recognition and promotion.

You never can tell how this may come about. Southern Railway associates like to recount how Frank L. Jenkins got his first big promotion from his position as passenger agent. The passenger to whom he showed unusual courtesy happened to be Mrs. J. P. Morgan, wife of the famous banker. The letter he received from his boss referring to the incident was addressed to him as "district passenger agent," a big step up. Mr. Jenkins went on to become general passenger traffic manager of the line.

"But," you may very well ask, "doesn't all this courtesy guff smack of apple polishing? And can't any intelligent person see what the game is?"

You make a good point, and we are going to ask a university professor to deal with it.

Says Professor Harry Walker Hepner of the Department of

Psychology, Syracuse University, in his book "It's Nice to Know People Like You":

"Only little men of low caliber play up to the other person's prejudices and manipulate him to their own advantage. If you merely find out a man's religion or politics or business and get him interested in you so that you can exploit him, you are blind to the best in him. Eventually, he will turn against you because, having exhausted your bag of tricks, he will know you for what you are. Obviously, the way to begin the development of a genuine, friendly personality is to mix freely with people, all kinds of people." *

In business, extra, individual attention has to be sincere—not directed toward making the customer write or speak to the boss. Such tactics backfire. A commendation obviously sought by an employee will do him harm. The point is to treat people well, always. As a habit. Don't press for the reward. Special rewards come unexpectedly, from doing good deeds secretly. The man who doesn't care who gets the credit does a lot of good for other people—and himself. *If you are at any time unhappy or bored, try doing something to help somebody.* "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."

"A good personal attitude is the secret of getting along with people," says C. R. Harding, President of the Pullman Company. "Try it out for yourself. If you get on the main line of good human relations at the start of a day's work, you'll see that the green light of progress keeps flashing for you all day long. You'll be proving to yourself that human relations can make or break an individual."

Here's the sort of true, human story you can find in most

* Reprinted from "It's Nice to Know People Like You" by Harry Walker Hepner, by permission of the publishers, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.

any big business outfit. This one is told by an officer of Standard Oil Company, of California:

"It was a chilly day, with the wind blowing straight from the North Pole. A youngster was pedaling around one of our refineries on a bicycle collecting samples for laboratory tests. His bare hands were blue and chapped. At one of his stops, the boy's discomfort was noticed by the man in charge there. The big fellow reached into his pocket and pulled out a pair of warm, wool-lined gloves.

" 'Here, kid,' he said, 'you seem to need them.'

"Today the man who gave the gloves is in charge of all Standard of California's refineries. Perhaps the glove incident was without significance in his progress. Yet, the day he received his latest promotion a group was standing around discussing it, and the fellow who got the gloves that raw day told about the gift.

" 'Yeah,' spoke up one of the group, 'he's a good guy to work for.'

"And the way the others nodded assent would have convinced an eavesdropper that maybe the spirit reflected by the glove incident did have something to do with the way a general favorite had gone ahead."

The tact and courtesy habit works for you in many ways. It ought especially to be used in our more intimate human relationships.

In fact, a greater showing of consideration for others is required within the family than in business relationships. The fact that she is *your* wife gives you no right to boss her around, ignore her, or indicate that you think her opinions are stupid. The fact that he is *your* husband gives you no right to flare back at him and rebuff every suggestion about family affairs. The fact it is *your* child is no reason why you may browbeat or treat the child with lack of consideration. In family relationships, we may with great benefit bear in mind the basic rule:

"Think, speak, and act in terms of other people's interests."

In following this general rule, we must observe a specific rule: Do not flatly contradict others, whether in the immediate family, among our acquaintances, or in business relationships. Let's assume that it's important to change someone's opinion. If we indicate, in the first place, that we regard the man's opinion as scatterbrained or stupid, he'll immediately brace himself against us. The issue, up to that time of small importance, suddenly becomes of great importance. His pride as well as his integrity is at stake. A direct contradiction will be bitterly resented, every time. We've all seen this. One fact must be immediately clear: You must have the person emotionally with you before you can suggest an alternative line of thought. Even then, the process of changing a person's opinion has to be accomplished bit by bit.

On the other hand, when in the course of discussion a person finds *he* is in the wrong, he will gain most by admitting it promptly, frankly. The other person always recognizes this as big-minded or big-hearted and pays him back with the thought: "This man unconsciously feels sufficiently sure of his own worth to acknowledge he's in the wrong, when he is in the wrong." Or, "What a courteous, generous fellow to take all the blame. Maybe, after all, I was at fault!"

"Not only does the exercise of courtesy reflect itself directly in advancement and pay," says T. S. Petersen, President of Standard Oil Company of California, "but just being friendly brings to one a priceless feeling of inner satisfaction. Courtesy enables us to get along with others—and to live with ourselves."

Courtesy and tact aid digestion and make for good health. They smooth away the frictions with other human beings that, through resulting worry, often break down a person's nerves or digestive system. "Worry kills more people than work," is an old adage that is literally true. On the other hand, you may

have noticed that good humor and good health usually go together. Physicians say good humor is quite as apt to cause good health, as good health is to cause good humor.

This discussion of courtesy should not be closed without including this story told by R. M. VanSant of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad:

"After the arrival of Train 22 from Washington at the lower level of Camden Station one Saturday afternoon, an unaccompanied gentleman got off the train. When he reached the stairs leading to the upper level, he saw a woman with a suitcase and two small children, about to ascend. He said a word to her, then put the two children under his arms, carried them to the top of the stairs, put them down, doffed his hat again, and went on his way.

"On the arrival of Train 26 on the Saturday afternoon following, the same employee saw the same gentleman again pause at the foot of the stairs, this time to pick up the heavy suitcase of a feeble woman, and carry it to the top.

"But this time one of our uniformed men could not, as he expressed it, keep the good news to himself, and he went to the woman and said:

" 'Madam, do you know who it was that carried your suitcase up the stairs?'

" 'No,' she replied.

" 'That,' said the employee proudly, 'was Daniel Willard, the president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company.' "

In his long period of public service many paid Daniel Willard back for his kindly interest in helping other people.

Knowing that people will pay us back, for good or ill, here are some facts worth remembering:

1. Because we are self-centered, we seldom realize it when we are discourteous.

2. Untactful habits that belittle people set powerful influences to work against the untactful one.
3. Give sympathy; don't seek it.
4. "People are different." If you call a person by his first name, he may like it. Another may resent it. Let the other fellow break down the conventional barrier first.
5. Just ignoring people may cause deep resentment.
6. Courtesy, smoothing away frictions with other people, reduces worry and makes for good health. It pays in money and advancement.
7. People will find us out if we attempt to play on their prejudices and manipulate them.
8. Flat contradictions are bitterly resented, even by those closest to us.
9. Confession of error wins respect and cooperation.
10. If anyone is unhappy or bored, let him try doing something helpful for someone.

PART TWO

Getting Ideas Across to People

CHAPTER 6 Conversation Is a Two-way Deal

CHAPTER 7 Your Letter Is You Speaking

CHAPTER 8 Personal Television by Telephone

CHAPTER 9 Make a Speech and Feel No Pain

CHAPTER SIX

Conversation Is a Two-way Deal

When two people meet, say, on a Monday morning, after brief greetings, the one who's fastest on the uptake starts to talk. About what? Ten to one, something about himself—the fish *he* caught, the show *he* saw, what *he* grew in *his* garden, about *his* trip, *his* automobile, *his* youngsters, and so on. Sure—he talks about himself.

But the other fellow is only half listening. He's just waiting for an opening to crash in and talk a bit himself. And when he does, what does he talk about?

About himself, of course—where *he's* been, what *he's* done, what *he* told so-and-so.

All this is just human nature and we needn't be critical of people who do it. They are just following a natural impulse; each one trying, in this way or that, to build himself up.

But what do they gain in information, good will or otherwise? Most anyone will agree that such sounding off, such pumping up of one's self, quickens no esteem in the other person. Such talk only gives vent to the passing vanity of self-expression. It means nothing. As a friend once said, "After twenty years of talking about my golf game, I've found out that nobody is interested in my golf game but myself."

The first thing we may note about conversation, then, is that we should *talk in terms of the other person's interests*.

What does the thoughtful person do in a conversation? Well, first, he listens. With a little self-restraint, he can listen instead of talking himself. We're not suggesting he be dull and stodgy, with nothing to say. Certainly a person, to make his influence felt, must have something to say and say it well. People like a strong, colorful, animated personality. They like a person who comes out of his shell and takes part. But the point is that the commonest error in conversation is that of overtalking the other fellow. At very least, the continuous talker gets to be an unholy bore.

If anyone expects cooperation from the other fellow, he has to be a good listener. The listener is paid, first, and most importantly, in the good will of the talker. Doesn't the talker always think the interested listener is an excellent conversationalist, and smart, too?

Furthermore, if you have something fairly important to say to another person, isn't it best to let him talk himself out first so that he will have a free mind to give attention to what you have to say?

Too few people keep in mind that in *conversation* you are talking *with* another person, not to him. Conversation has to be a two-way deal. There is much in that word "with" (for the prefix "con") in this particular usage. The attitude of talking "with" tends to bring the other person in with you emotionally; he feels the cooperative spirit; he is inclined to join *with* you, rather than be against you in what you may propose. So let's not monopolize a conversation. The other fellow will repay us if we give him a break.

Long-drawn-out continuous talk is hard to take. Did you ever notice a person being subjected to it; how he takes on a benumbed look, his eyes glazed, like a suffering animal? The considerate talker will pause at frequent intervals and let the

other person make a comment. Few persons are more nerve-racking than one who goes on endlessly, filling in the gaps between sentences with "and-uh" that effectively blocks out the other fellow. It is a relief to the listener just to be able to say occasionally "Is that so?" or "Yes." Unless one is delivering a public speech, it is seldom advisable for a person to talk continuously to another for more than one minute.

To our list of suggestions for good human relations in conversation, then, let's add: *Be a good listener. Cultivate a talent for occasional silence. Don't overtalk the other fellow.*

A dog can talk to you. When he comes to you wagging his tail, he's saying "I like you." If he wags his whole body and gives a joyous bark, he's saying, "I'm sure glad to see you, my great and good friend." And he expects a little recognition, a friendly word, a pat on the back.

When a dog barks sharply, uncertainly, he is in fact uncertain. Dog lovers know that a quiet, friendly, firm word will reassure the dog.

When he prances, barks playfully, and crouches down in his forequarters, he is saying that he wants to play. He wants you to throw a ball or stick for him to retrieve.

When he growls, with his ruff on end and a baleful look in his eye, he's warning you off. You'd better be careful.

Human beings, like dogs, say something to you by their attitudes and actions. In fact, we communicate with others with our whole personalities, and we may say many things without uttering a word. When we do speak—whether we smile or frown, whether we are loud or mild, cringing or aggressive, nervous or relaxed—our manner importantly affects the persons to whom we speak. Our attitude inclines them to agree or to disagree with us, to accept or to reject what we say.

So, let's add a third conversational precept: *Our attitude and manner should add power or appeal to our words.*

A newspaper editor, whose interests were as wide as the

range of human knowledge and activities, used to say that "the principal aim of education is to make one an effective conversationalist." In large measure this is true.

The civilized man could not exist without conversation. He uses it for four main purposes: (1) to convey information, (2) to gain information, (3) to persuade, or (4) just to show a human interest in other human beings—to win and hold friends.

And there are three main requirements of the successful conversationalist: (1) He should have something worth while to say, thoughts or facts to express, (2) he should have words to form and present such thoughts or facts, and (3) he should have the grace to express himself in terms of the other person's interests.

"We rule with words," said Disraeli. It is true that combinations of words, magic-like, have swayed men and nations, have created war and made the peace. Balzac said, "There are words that cut like steel." Who is there who has not experienced them? The Bible says, "Pleasant words are an honeycomb, sweet to the soul and health to the bone." Modern psychiatrists are, in fact, curing physical ailments with words.

But words are not enough. Let us balance our consideration of the great power of words with Emerson's warning: "What you *are* thunders so loud I cannot hear what you say." People add weight to the words of the solid genuine character and discount the words of the fickle and insincere. Common sayings are: "Consider the source" and "Actions speak louder than words." *Unless people believe in you, they will not believe what you say.*

Some have said that thought began with the invention of words. Certainly, the use of primitive sound symbols marked the beginning of language. Thereafter language led to precision and variety in expression; and, as written symbols for words and figures were invented and developed, thinking in the higher levels was made possible. Without words man would

be little more than a beast. People plan and imagine with words, drawings, and figures. They devise and carry on the complex and fascinating world we live in by words.

A student may say, "I know it but I can't say it." Educators will not accept this. If you really know it, you can say it.

Words take on varying meanings for various people. The subject of semantics deals with this. "Red" may be to you just a color you like. To another it may be a political and social idea that he hates; uttering the word to this man may be like waving a red flag at a bull. There are words that set loose strong emotions in people: words that make you mad or make you laugh. Since people are governed largely by their emotions, it is vital in business, social, and everyday life that we know about words and what they signify to various persons. Words become distorted. Sometimes they get to be stereotyped. Sometimes they imply meanings different from those they originally had. It is important that we know what these variations are. People conditioned in certain ways, such as trained soldiers and lots of others besides, are galvanized into action by a single word. "March," "halt," "stop," "go" are signals to which people respond almost automatically.

A deck of cards holds such endless and elaborate combinations that mathematicians cannot go much beyond general theories as to how the cards are likely to fall. There are eighty-eight notes on the standard piano keyboard. Think of the endless chords, harmonies, and dissonances that can be brought forth from these keys. But there are more than 100,000 words in the current "Webster's New International Dictionary." Children and primitive people use only a few hundred words. Well-educated people use only 3,000 or 4,000. Even Shakespeare used only 15,000 words. Though our stock of words is small, consider the infinite number of combinations we may make to express every shade and gradation of meaning and emotion.

Words play a major role in our lives, in helping us to com-

municate with other people, to understand other people, to persuade other people. They help us to get along with people and to get along in the world. A competent survey shows an adequate vocabulary to be the characteristic most common to successful men. Many people collect stamps, coins, or antiques; but more interesting and much more profitable is the hobby of collecting words.

Most people just pick up words in a haphazard way as they go along and make no especial effort to accumulate a good stock of them. It seems no more than common sense that we should go at the important matter of vocabulary building in a more systematic way and that we should know the exact meaning of each word we use so that we may not be wide of the mark, vague, uncertain, or confusing in our attempts to communicate with or persuade other people.

This matter is touched on more fully in Chapter Seven on letter writing. There we suggest the simple notebook-dictionary method of writing down every new word you see, and, later, of looking up its meaning in the dictionary and writing down the definition after the word. Wide and varied reading helps tremendously. If a person combines this with the notebook plan, he will be delighted at how amazingly his stock of usable words goes up. A youngster who began this at the age of fifteen soon overwhelmed his listeners by the rare, picturesque, and academic words that rushed out every time he opened his mouth.

"Is that good?" you ask. No, not especially. In the case mentioned, time and maturity cured the youth's excess, as they cure many other excesses.

We may note that stilted, bookish, and technical words should be used with some care. Naturalness has a charm. Even in academic circles, the tendency is toward informal expression.

Recently a friend of ours, a writer, advised his son, a uni-

versity student, to read Dr. Rudolph Flesch's "The Art of Plain Talk." He spoke of avoiding complex words, holding sentences to around twenty words, and following other suggestions contained in this excellent book.

"Now, pop," remonstrated the son, "you send me to college to learn sentence structure, qualifying clauses, subjunctive moods, and all that. After I struggle through all that, do I have to come down to 'plain talk'?"

"That's right," said his father. "You have to go through a lot of study before you can effectively manhandle the language. Learn a great deal, then simplify. Words are just tools. A resourceful man will constantly find new, simpler, more direct ways to use them. You may break the rules only if you know the rules; and you never can be forceful or effective if you feel bound by the rules."

So, although one may use comparatively few words in everyday talk, it is pleasant and reassuring for a person to know he has a large reserve. It will interest and stimulate your listeners, if you can occasionally drop into an otherwise commonplace conversation a crisp word or phrase, used in a fresh, new way.

In everyday conversation we may sharpen up what we have to say by giving thought to our choice of words. This is a habit. It is the reverse of the habit of slovenly speech, the habit of using tired, worn-out, drab words. Take "got," for instance. It isn't a pretty word, not a very meaningful word. In fact, its best use is, occasionally, for emphasis. Yet "got," with its corruption "gotta," is the most overworked and misused word in the language. "I got me a new hat," "When you gotta go, you gotta go,"—you hear the word and it's ill-begotten offspring "gotta" until your stomach turns. So with the other down-at-the-heels members of this tribe: "yeah," "mad," "cute," "nice," "swell," "awful," "OK," and the impossible "okey-dokey."

We are not talking about slang expressions which in the be-

ginning nearly always pick up and add color to conversation and sometimes become useful, permanent additions to the language. In fact, as H. L. Mencken points out in his "The American Language," much of the vitality of American talk and writing is due to the ingenuity and boldness with which we coin and use new words and phrases. The warning is against the lazy habit of using bleached-out, worn-out words, that were not very effective in the first place, that have become so blunted by constant use that they don't cut into the mind.

Right along with that habit is the one of slurring over words: saying "jools" for jewels, or "winda" for window, and the habit of dropping the "g" on the suffix "ing." "I was thinkin' we oughta get goin'," for a tiresome example. There is not much distinction, stimulation, or inspiration in expressions of that kind. *Let's avoid word-fatigue.* If words are tools in thinking, let's consider the level of our thinking as it may appear to others when we use words such as these.

Before we leave this phase of the subject, we must mention briefly what Ethel Cotton, author of "Keeping Mentally Alive," calls "rag-bag" conversation. This is talk about commonplace things without concentration on any one topic—just chatter about the insignificant happenings of one's workaday life. The subjects are generally household troubles, sickness, business irritations, and such unpleasanties. This is the unthinking talk of the person who talks to relieve his feelings. And it is quite depressing and futile, and leaves one with a sense of confusion.

Miss Cotton regards the sort of conversation that follows as an abomination, too:

Two men meet and shake hands heartily.

"Well, Ed, how are you?"

"I'm fine. How are you?"

"O.K. How's the missus and the family?"

"All well. How's yours?"

"Fine. Well, how are things?"

"Oh, you know. Just the same as usual."

"Yeah! It's pretty quiet."

"Well, I gotta run along now. Give my regards to the folks."

"Sure. Mine to yours. Give me a ring some time."

"Sure will. So long, Ed."

"S'long, Bill."

Well, there's no point in it, but it is, in effect, a cordial greeting and it's better than being grumpy. Not all such conversations end so pointlessly. Many that begin with remarks about the weather, for example, turn out to be entertaining or informative. The main thing is to switch from the conversational icebreakers as quickly as possible into something new, refreshing, interesting, and worth-while.

But to do that one has to have something to say. Frank J. Taylor, the magazine writer, says that one of the first requirements of a good writer is the habit of being observant. The same habit is of first importance to the conversationalist. Reading, travel, and mixing with people are helpful, but these things should be done with an alert, observant attitude. Look for things of interest and you'll find them.

George Herbert Palmer, late Professor of Philosophy at Harvard, in his "Self-Cultivation in English," points out that most people don't take a really good look. He wrote:

"Once, after puzzling long over the charm of Homer, I applied to a learned friend and said to him, 'Can you tell me why Homer is so interesting? Why can't you and I write as he wrote? Why is it that his art is lost, and that today it is impossible for us to awaken an interest at all comparable to his?' 'Well,' said my friend, 'I have often meditated on that, but it seems to come to about this: Homer looked long at a thing. Why,' said he, 'do you know that if you should hold up your

thumb and look at it long enough, you would find it immensely interesting?' ” *

But this has to be a habit. We think, in this connection, of a man who had had seemingly every advantage of education and travel. He came from a family of what are considered cultivated people. He attended two universities and graduated as a modern language major. He traveled widely and lived for several years in Europe. Yet this man, who finally settled down to farming, could talk of little beyond the petty happenings and irritations of his workaday life. His wide experiences never became a part of him. With all his education and experiences, he failed to acquire the habit of observing, which, combined with a personal philosophy and sense of humor, makes a person an informative and entertaining conversationalist.

Some years before the Second World War a couple made a trip through Eastern Europe and the Near East. We awaited their return eagerly, expecting to enjoy with them their observations in this colorful and little-known-to-us region of the world. But what a disappointment! They talked of the bad food they had in Athens, the colds they caught on a trip down the Danube, the night the wife wore the wrong dress and had a dismal time at a big party in Budapest. So far as we could see, they might have had a better and more interesting time on a trip to the grocer's.

By contrast, a few months later a salesman of our acquaintance dropped in to see us. At first we were thinking of how we might quickly get rid of him. But he began to tell us about the trip he had recently taken over virtually the same route that had been traveled by our friends. He was bubbling over with items and comment of lively interest: the old mosque he attended in a little-visited part of Istanbul, the fig wine he drank

* Reprinted from "Self-Cultivation in English" by George Herbert Palmer, by permission of the publishers, Houghton Mifflin Company.

with a family on the island of Cyprus, the Greek peasant suit, with a skirt, he bought for himself in Delphi, the wedding he witnessed in Sofia. He took us right along with him. He gave us plenty of intervals to comment or ask questions. Further acquaintance with this man revealed a habit of acquiring interesting information and a talent for amusing or penetrating comment. He has become a welcome visitor because of his interested, alert, sympathetic, and good-humored attitude toward all his experiences and toward all the people he meets including us.

Let's turn now to the simple problem of conveying information. Obviously, a person must talk in terms the other person will understand. He must use words familiar to the other person. One time a visitor, talking to our Sunday school, asked, "Children, do you know what money is?" Then he told them, "It's a medium of exchange." As you may surmise, there was no lighting up of little faces after that explanation. Let's use words familiar to the persons addressed.

A person can understand only in terms of that which he already knows. We go gradually from the familiar to the new. The old example, of the over-all description of Italy, comes to mind: "Italy is shaped like a boot." Your listener begins to understand at once. He knows what a boot looks like, and with the familiar bootlike outline in his mind is ready for you to fill in the detail. This is important in helping your listener, and it saves you time and nervous energy. Talk in terms that the other person understands.

People jockey back and forth and waste a vast amount of time because they lack in the beginning a clear understanding of the issue being discussed. Haven't you noticed how an argument goes on full tilt in a group or conference until, finally, some clear-minded person speaks up with a sharp statement of just what the issue is, that then there is often an immediate

agreement? Half the arguments in life come about because people don't have a common understanding of what they're talking about.

Two things may well be borne in mind when we seek to persuade. First, is the basic rule in all human relations: Speak in terms of the other person's interest. Indicate to him how he will benefit. Second, put the proposition in the form of a mild suggestion. "Gentle words, quiet words, are after all the most powerful words," it has been said. "They are more convincing, more compelling, more prevailing." People, as we have noted in previous chapters, don't want to be persuaded, don't want us to change their minds. If they change, they want it to be of their own free will. So, let's just state the facts clearly and offer, very mildly, a suggested course of action, perhaps ask a question that suggests it. This is the theory of low-pressure selling, as discussed in Chapter Ten.

To persuade, present the facts and offer a mild suggestion.

In connection with the *mild* suggestion, we may note here that many people fall into the habit of overemphasis. Especially women, *men* often say. George Jean Nathan, the drama critic, speaking from the detached but perhaps frustrated viewpoint of a bachelor, says outright that no woman who speaks emphatically can be lovely. Extreme expressions carry no special force, Dr. Fink points out in his book "Release from Nervous Tension." "They bore or disturb your friends and excite only yourself. But in understatement there is charm." * So it's a safe generalization to say, *Talking at the top of your voice, either literally or in violence of expressions, and exaggerated facial contortions are distasteful.*

While women may seem often to talk of trifles in world-thrilling hyperbole, men are apt to be too slow and ponderous. The strong silent man may be only dull and silent.

* Reprinted from "Release from Nervous Tension" by permission of Simon and Schuster, Inc. Copyright, 1943, by David Harold Fink.

People want you to participate in their interests. They want you to talk with them. They resent it if you don't. A police officer once gave us this advice, "If you are stopped by a traffic officer, don't just sit silently in your car. Talk to the officer. You do not necessarily have to try to talk him out of it. Just explain a bit how you happened to be driving too fast. Don't press the point. Ask him if there are many violations, talk to him about his car or motorcycle, talk about anything. It is even better to battle with him than to ignore him. A cop is a lonely man and inside him he has the feeling nobody likes him. If you recognize him as a fellow human being—well, maybe, who knows?"

Here are a lot of further suggestions:

In joining a new group, it is best not to switch the conversation immediately to something new. People will resent it if we do.

Talk to all those present, don't direct yourself solely to one.

Touchy subjects such as divorce are to be avoided.

Criticizing the firm or occupation of the other fellow is not good manners.

Avoid prying into private affairs.

Before being "brutally frank" to anyone, let's ask "Is it true, kind, or necessary, and what good will it do?" Let's remember, few acts are more delicate, more often resented, than telling somebody "something for his own good."

Draw children into the conversation. They are human beings, too. Talk to them as human beings; it will delight them and their parents. If they are timid, it will help bring them out. If they are brattish, the pleasant recognition may help cure the resentment against having been badly handled that possibly caused them to be brats.

Animation kindles a spark in others. *If you want to have a good time yourself, don't be a wet blanket.* Possibly the worst

attitude one may take in a conversation is that of cynical superiority.

Talk about people is all right. People are the most interesting subjects in the world, as newspaper editors and many others have found out to their own profit; but malicious gossip is poisonous. Speak of people with tolerance for their weaknesses; take the generous attitude. Gossip reveals a small, mean person who, in attempts to tear down another, reveals his own feeling of inferiority. Seek the admirable trait and comment on it.

People's hobbies or special interests make good conversation. People love to tell you about their woodworking, gardening, dogs, art, clubs, photography, music, reading. Encourage them to talk. You may get some useful or interesting information.

A touch of humor is welcomed by everyone. One may well add it to any discussion of current events. *A light touch lightens the weight of heavy subjects.*

Depressing, distressing topics are to be avoided. Why talk about your ailments unless your listener reasonably might do something to help you?

If you are going to tell a joke, be sure to have the ending clearly in mind. The punch line comes at the very end of the last sentence. Puns are welcomed, even by the people who groan at them. In fact, a groan is the proper response. A perfectly pat pun is apt to be poor; like borsch, it has to be slightly sour. One cannot be a punster if he thinks beforehand. Just let it go and groan along with your listeners.

Clear articulation helps. Open the mouth and speak out. Don't mumble. Keep the hands away from the mouth.

Speak just loud enough to be distinctly heard by the listener.

Use the lower registers of the voice. The twangers, nose talkers, and shrill talkers are as hard on themselves as they are on other people.

The "talking with" theory of conversation is aimed at bringing about harmony. This involves respect for others' opinions.

There are two reasons for us to follow this rule—always. First, people feel that we treat them with contempt when we flout their opinions by saying, “I don’t agree with you” or “you’re wrong about that.” Among the favorite precepts of Ellis J. McClanahan, Standard Oil marketing vice-president, is this, “*One should build on what another man says, not overturn it.*” To get cooperation, he points out, a person has to find areas of agreement with the other person.

On the other hand, if we brusquely disagree with people, many will try to pay us back for our lack of respect with some injury. Not even the best friendship nor the most affectionate family relationship will stand the strain of a flat contradiction.

“But you’re mistaken, I’m sure,” a certain woman is in the habit of saying. “I happen to know the people personally concerned,” and so on, following with the definite facts and dates that show you to be wrong. She is a smart person, well informed, and it causes you no pain to observe her face or figure. Nevertheless, she is by way of being the social pariah of the society in which she moves, because she contradicts people.

Never put another person in the wrong is a sound precept of human relations.

One of the most popular and successful men in his field was known to his associates as “the great harmonizer.” He enjoyed the help and good opinion of everyone. In private conversation he was an attentive listener. When he spoke, he built on what the other person had said. If he found it necessary to disagree, he would mention some phase, actual or implied, of agreement with the other person, and ask a question that would open further discussion, leading often to a complete understanding.

In a business conference, “the great harmonizer” would sit and listen until all the others had spoken. Then he would say something to this effect: “It seems to me, gentlemen, there are three (or whatever the number) main issues developed at this

meeting. Would it not be reasonable to adopt such-and-such a part from point number one, such a part from number two, and work these together with a part of number three, leading us to an effective course of action upon which we all can agree?"

Through his talent for recognizing the viewpoints of others, this man, of no especial brilliance except in human relations, acquired a great reputation for sound judgment. His associates not only had confidence in his wisdom but were all disposed to act with him and in his behalf.

The same principle applies as effectively in personal or social-group conversation as in business. The person who selects the best of each and acts to bring harmony out of diverse facts and opinions, to make a point that is significant or interesting, wins the good will and the admiration of all.

To summarize:

1. Conversation is a two-way deal. Let's let the other fellow talk with us.
2. Since words are the tools of speech, we should have an adequate kit. A person may build a big vocabulary by writing down every unfamiliar word he sees, with its definition.
3. Avoid trite, worn-out words, slovenly speech, "rag-bag" conversation, and depressing subjects.
4. Words have different meanings for different people. Watch the semantics.
5. Start persuasion from the other person's existing beliefs. To persuade, present the facts and offer a mild suggestion.
6. One's attitude, actions, and manner make for acceptance or rejection of what we have to say. We speak with our personalities as well as with words.

7. Unless people believe in us they will not believe what we say.
8. The aim in discussion should be to bring about a sense of harmony and mutual understanding. Don't contradict, but add another light on what the other person says.
9. To explain or describe, proceed from the familiar to the new.
10. To be an interesting conversationalist, be observant.
11. Animation adds interest, but loud voice, violent expressions, and exaggerated facial expressions are to be avoided except in extreme situations.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Your Letter Is You Speaking

Dear Mr. Smithers:

This will serve to acknowledge the receipt of your esteemed letter of the 15th instant and in reply thereto I beg to state . . .

Seldom does anyone receive a letter nowadays that begins with such a time-wasting, dreary windup. Nearly everyone has come to realize that letters ought to be written to the reader's interests. This introduction certainly isn't. It requires the reader to wade through more than twenty unnecessary, interest-killing words at the very start of the letter.

If one has in mind the reader's interests, he will write as nearly as possible as though he were talking to the person addressed. Thus he will avoid the too-formal style of writing which suggests that the writer has a stuffy personality and a routine attitude toward the reader.

It is even more important in letter writing than in personal conversation that we follow the basic rule of thinking, speaking, and acting in terms of the other person's interests. There are two important reasons for this.

1. The reader cannot see the writer's facial expression nor note the tone of voice that might modify the meaning of the actual words used. So the first rule of letter writing is: *Take extra care to be courteous.* Let's be sure that the tone of the

letter is friendly and that no word is used that might possibly be misinterpreted and offend the reader.

2. The reader cannot ask questions to clear up any doubtful meaning. So the second rule is: *Take extra care to make the meaning clear.* Otherwise the reader may be put to the trouble of writing his questions to us and of awaiting a reply.

These two main rules apply to all letters, whether business or personal. Courtesy and clarity are mentioned here at the beginning for emphasis, and it may be said that all the other points touched upon later in this chapter go back to these two fundamentals.

The modern trend in all correspondence is toward friendly informality. Many business letters, even, open with the salutation "Dear Jim," rather than "Dear Mr. Smithers." Whether or not one may use such a salutation depends on how well the writer knows the person addressed and on the nature of the subject dealt with.

Before starting any letter, the writer should have definitely in mind what he wants his letter to accomplish.

In social correspondence: If the letter is to cheer up a friend who is ill, keep it friendly, optimistic, free from bad news. If it is to make an appointment, make the suggested date specific as to day, hour, and exact place. If it's just a friendly note to let someone know you're thinking of her or him, keep the tone warm and cordial and include any incidental news or comment that may interest or amuse the reader. In every case the letter should be written with keen sensitivity for the reader's interests.

Because all the nuances of personal relationships and all sorts of special circumstances are usually involved, it is difficult to cite any specific letters that readers, other than the ones addressed, would regard as excellent, or even satisfactory. However, here is a personal note that speaks the tactful nature of its writer:

My dear Virginia:

We have just heard from our friends we expect from Atlanta, that they will not be here until late in May. If you still want us and it is quite convenient, we would love to come for the April 25th weekend. However, since you spoke of it any one of many things may have come up which would make it difficult for you to have us—some other engagement, or perhaps George will be home on furlough. So we will understand perfectly if you want to postpone it. Please be very frank about it.

We did have such fun when you were here and we are looking forward to seeing you and playing more of that fantastic bridge. Love to you and Lloyd.

Affectionately,
Jeanne

April 7

Noteworthy is the writer's careful consideration for the reader. See how Jeanne opens the way for Virginia, without embarrassment, to put off the date for an invitation to visit if the time is inconvenient.

In writing business letters, as in social correspondence, we should have clearly in mind what we want each letter to accomplish before we start to write it. Business letters are written to carry information to the reader or to bring a desired response from him. Usually both purposes are involved. The businessman is a man of action. As he finishes reading any report or letter that comes to him he asks, "What shall I *do* about this?" So in writing a business letter the specific main purpose should be sharply defined: Just what do we want the reader to do upon receipt of this letter?

Here are a few suggestions that may help the writer obtain from the reader the response he desires:

1. Put the main point of the letter at the opening. If one

starts by grinding out a lot of meaningless words, he kills the reader's interest. Let's not beat around the bush, but let the reader know at once what the main point is. Information of less importance or the argument for our proposition may follow in the body of the letter.

Put the main point of interest to the reader in the simplest, clearest words, in the first sentence of the letter. This renders a real service to him. The person addressed will appreciate it and be encouraged to read the rest of the letter with interest.

But if the letter begins with clouded, meaningless wording, the reader will feel put out; and if he is a very busy person, he may be quite disgusted and toss it aside without reading it.

Let's not try to "sneak up on" the reader with a touchy proposition, one we think he may be doubtful about. Attempts to build up a case and then submit the proposition are apt to be regarded as weakness or uncertainty on the writer's part. Crack right out with it in the opening sentence. The more touchy the subject, the more confidently and frankly one should approach it, even though we may be asking for a job or a raise in salary.

2. Make it clear. Be concise and exact, omitting statements or words that do not bear directly on the subject. Let's avoid vague terms. No one need hesitate to repeat the same word in the same paragraph or even in the same sentence, if necessary, to be sure he'll be understood. Using short words and holding sentences generally to twenty-five words or less make understanding easy. This saves the reader time and nervous energy. It may help to bear in mind the advertising writer's aim: to make the thought "leap to the mind."

3. To be sure our reader does not overlook any one of several points, we may put each point in a separate paragraph and number it, as is being done here.

4. The letter should close by asking for the specific action we want the reader to take. See that the question "So what?"

is answered. If our letter is merely for his information, we should say so at the close, provided that was not so indicated in the opening. If we are requesting several actions, it may be worth while to list and number them separately so that none will be overlooked. Every letter should close as cordially as its subject and nature warrant.

5. Ranking right along with clarity is courtesy. The reader sees only the cold type. In speaking face to face, we convey a large part of our meaning by our facial expressions or gestures. So the writer has to be very sure that his letter has a friendly tone. If the reader doesn't like the writer's attitude, his response is apt to be unfavorable, regardless of the merits of the proposition carried by the letter.

If your letter is designed to induce a favorable response, write with the reader's viewpoints and interests always in mind.

See how closely this letter of application for a position follows these points:

Camp Beale, Calif., Feb. 15.

Dear Mr. Johnson:

When I am released from active duty, March 1, I hope I may have opportunity to join your sales staff and to work out a career with your organization which I have long regarded as the progressive leader in its field.

My specialized training for sales and merchandising, indicated in the attached outline of personal experience and background, would make it possible for me to become a producing salesman quickly. Also I have worked in one of your mills during school vacation, so I have a start toward understanding the manufacturing end of your business.

Attached are copies of several letters about me, including one from Mr. A. J. Jones, whom you know.

I am used to carrying out instructions with little super-

vision, and I find it easy to get along with customers and fellow workers.

May I phone your office for an appointment to see you when I come to San Francisco, March 3?

Very truly yours,

Howard Thayer,
1st Sgt., AUS,
Headquarters, W. D. Pers. Cen.,
Camp Beale, California.

This is a businesslike and appealing letter. It is brief and to the point, taking little time or effort to read. In the personal outline that accompanied it was all the information the prospective employer would want to know: the writer's age, education, jobs held and for how long, full name, and home address; also fraternal and like affiliations, and his status as a married man with one child—all this information typewritten and easy to read.

Further, the letter indicates an inclination to work enthusiastically and harmoniously in the interest of the firm. It has the personal touch by reference to a letter from a friend.

When we write a letter of complaint, let's set out our facts clearly, but state the case so that the other person may act in our behalf without loss of face. Assume the best of intentions on the part of the person addressed. If we expect favorable action instead of an argument, let's avoid violent expressions that antagonize the reader.

Here's a business letter of the sort that nearly everyone sometimes has to write:

KEMPTON, JONES & COMPANY
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
GENTLEMEN:

On October 26 Mrs. Whitaker purchased some dishes at your store and directed that they be shipped to our ad-

dress—306 Carlisle Avenue, Omaha, Nebraska. The shipment arrived, but on opening it last evening we found that the sugar bowl was broken. This was the only piece of hollow ware, and unfortunately it was placed in the bottom of the comparatively small but very heavy package. I suppose that shifting of the heavy plates in the package broke the sugar bowl.

The lid to the sugar bowl, marked with a large "30" was unbroken.

The bottom of the sugar bowl had the following notations:

69x55 1474-5105-30 7.50 ea.

On the attached sheet I am reproducing in detail the three tags that were on this shipment. (These giving full and specific identification of the package, what it contained, weight, value, when sold, when shipped, number of salesman and packer, number of the package itself, and other details.)

If you have a representative in Omaha I shall be glad to show him these tags and turn over the broken sugar bowl to him. Or, if you prefer, I'll send the broken bowl to you in Chicago.

I assume you will wish to replace it.

Yours truly,
JOHN WHITAKER

Attachment

Not a colorful letter, of course, but it did not need to be. It showed honest intent on the part of the writer and assumed, inoffensively and correctly, fairness on the part of Kempton, Jones & Company. Moreover, the letter and its attachment gave the fullest and most specific information.

Kempton, Jones & Company replied promptly, expressing regret and saying that the broken sugar bowl was being replaced. When this was received, Mr. Whitaker wrote a cordial note expressing admiration for the store and its policies. Mr. Whitaker to this day is a customer of Kempton, Jones & Company.

In answering letters of complaint, it should be borne in mind that the complainant wants action. If he's right and we're wrong, let's say so, promptly and cheerfully, and take the remedial action he requests. If a concession is to be made, it should be made cheerfully, at the opening of the letter, not grudgingly at the close.

If we expect the reader to change his attitude in any controversy, even though the facts are plainly against him, we must make it easy for him to reverse his position gracefully, without loss of face. A letter of irrefutable logic, putting the person addressed definitely in the wrong, will always be bitterly resented. It will seldom, if ever, bring the response the writer desires. One way of saving face for the reader is to write our letter on the assumption that his attitude is based on misunderstanding or a lack of facts. Then give him the complete facts tactfully, and finally ask reconsideration in the light of *all* the facts.

An executive of the Associated Press had an uncanny skill in settling disputes that naturally arise occasionally in such wide-flung organizations. This executive was a studious sort, rather than a mixer. But he made up for any shortcomings he may have had in face-to-face personality by the thoughtfulness of his letters. Suppose he had a controversy to settle between two newspapers in Pocatello, Idaho. He would wire his bureau chief nearest to Pocatello for all information, not only as to the business angles involved but as to the personalities of the principal men on each side of the dispute. From all other available sources he would gather similar information. He would then

think out the individual and business interests of each party and finally write his letters accordingly. His letters were written with such keen consideration for each person addressed and expressed such a spirit of fairness for the other party to the controversy, that he could send copies of each letter to both disputants. In this way he settled many a problem by remote control. His letter writing motto was, "Get all the facts, and think hard about the person addressed."

Many will recall the story of the man who closed his letter with "Sorry this letter is so long; I didn't have the time to write a short one." There's a lot in it. It is easy to let yourself go, let your words flow. But you win the good will of the reader if you make the effort to save him time by writing a letter that is compact and, at the same time, clear, complete, and friendly. A person who writes too much is like one who talks too long; he's a bore.

Wide and observant reading will help anyone acquire skill in writing. One of the best professional writers attributes his success, in considerable part, to his habit, while reading, of noting down every unfamiliar word he runs across. "I never let a guilty word escape," he says. At a convenient time he looks the words up in the dictionary, writes down the definition of each, later keeps watch to see how they are used in books and magazines. Likewise, he notes unusually appealing phrases or expressions. "There is a virtue in the physical act of writing these down," he says. "The act of writing fixes the word in the memory."

Skill in writing letters, as in every other phase of human endeavor, comes mainly from practice. To learn to write, write. The art of writing is seldom, if ever, a gift. The best writers are the ones who work the hardest at it.

It seems well-nigh impossible to overemphasize the impor-

tance of accuracy and clear thinking not only in writing letters but in the whole field of human relations.

People always appreciate service, and in letter writing we can do our readers no greater service than to make the meaning crystal clear and easy to understand.

Beyond that, however, are the important basic effects of the habit of accurate, clear thinking on one's own personal happiness. Such a habit will help remove the fog and confusion that are in the minds of most people as to what they want and need to accomplish. It will clear up most of the difficulties with other people, for such difficulties usually grow out of misunderstanding rather than actual clash of interests. Profitable, indeed, is the cultivation of the habit of accurate and clear thinking. And the best schooling in that habit is in writing, because one must necessarily think clearly if he is to put down thoughts accurately on paper in the symbols of communication that we call words.

You need not be well educated to write effective letters. Unless you are writing for posterity instead of the particular person addressed, you needn't worry about smooth flow or rhetorical expression. Just say what you have to say, directly and clearly, in a nice friendly way. The idea is to transmit information or ideas in the way they may be most easily and agreeably received by the person addressed.

We were once associated with a man who wrote letters that brought remarkably good response, although he had had little schooling. He had two practices he always followed in writing a letter of any importance: Before he started he put down a simple statement of what he wished the letter to accomplish. He kept this before him as he wrote. Then, after his letter was finished, he looked it over carefully for any word or expression that might be misunderstood or cause resentment. He developed such a keen sensitivity for the reader's viewpoint that his associates said he could "smell" anything wrong. He realized

that words take on varying meanings, connotations, and implications; that some words, which express the precise meaning of the writer, may be in any given case symbols of something disliked by the reader. If any word or phrase might even remotely imply something distasteful to the reader, out it would go. He was, quite unconsciously, an expert practitioner in the field of semantics. As a result, the tone of his letters was always such as to invite favorable action.

The golden rule of letter writing is: Write to others as you would have them write to you.

We are judged personally by our letters. As the reader runs through the words written on the paper, he forms an opinion of us. He may think of us as being mentally alert, just routine, or confused in our thinking. He may think of us as being helpful and friendly, or self-centered and arrogant. Isn't it vital, therefore, that we write pleasant letters that are easy for the reader to understand?

Here is a check list for letter writers:

1. Is my letter *easy* to understand?
2. Does it state the main point at the opening?
3. Is the tone friendly?
4. Is it accurate, specific, and complete?
5. Does it show an active interest in the reader and his affairs?
6. Does it close positively and cordially?
7. If I were in the reader's place, would I respond favorably?

CHAPTER EIGHT

Personal Television by Telephone

George Walsh, partner in a large New York firm, dialed the number of Miss Evans, chief of the firm's stenographic pool.

"Miss Evans is away from her desk a moment, Mr. Walsh," came a pleasant voice over the phone. "May I ask her to call you?"

"Ask her to come into my office, please," Mr. Walsh replied.

When Miss Evans came in, Mr. Walsh told her his secretary had had to leave the firm's service suddenly, that he had to have a temporary secretary.

"I'd like to try the girl who answered your phone," he said. "She has a most agreeable voice and telephone personality."

"She does have a nice voice, but I never thought of Amy having much personality," Miss Evans replied. "She's rather plain and not very fast on dictation. However, she is a responsible little person and might work out all right, at least temporarily."

It so happened that Amy worked out very well on the new job. Her manner was quiet and efficient; her taking of dictation, though slow at first, rapidly improved; her work was accurate and dependable; and, above all, her voice and manner

on the telephone and with people who visited the office, were really charming. Amy was given the job permanently, one of the best for women employees of the firm.

Mrs. Gertrude H. Frese, Manager of Service Consultants for the New York Telephone Company, recounts that incident, together with many other true stories illustrating how good telephone manners have won opportunities for people in business.

We may think of the telephone, with its imperative ring, intruding upon our home lives, interrupting our business hours, as a mechanical robot that commands and drives us through the day and sometimes into the night. On the other hand, we may better regard it as a helpful assistant in our dealings with other people, in extending, smoothing, and making more effective our human relationships.

Used with warmth, spirit, and enthusiasm, the telephone will help us greatly in our personal and private activities. We may avoid disappointments by getting through quickly to people by telephone to let them know we will be detained, to change arrangements and understandings. We may greatly expand our circles of personal influence by telephone. We may talk with the sick or shut-ins; may easily and quickly express our appreciation or congratulations; transmit good news, or otherwise carry into effect the rule of human relations of thinking, speaking, and acting in terms of others' interests.

No instrument has done more to speed up personal dealings in industry and trade. It may be used effectively in many ways to announce new services, new merchandise, to follow up prospects, to buy and sell. The telephone is a highly dynamic and quickening helper.

The central fact about telephone conversations, social or business, that must be kept in mind is that the persons talking are invisible to each other. All specialists in telephone usage are agreed on that. The telephone is blind. You know that little

extra effort one always exerts in talking with the blind? That's the idea in telephoning—just a little extra consideration for the other person.

How effectively the blind person himself may visualize and work out his career in dealing with people by telephone is illustrated by this story from F. J. Reagan, Director and former Vice-president of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company:

Before the Second World War a college student, whom we shall call Henry Bulotti, worked part time for a wholesale florist to help pay his tuition. His job was to call on retail florists' shops with sample flowers and to obtain their orders. It was interesting work, and he liked it so well he thought he might go into it as a permanent career. But the war interrupted Henry's plans, and when he returned to civilian life he was blind.

Henry applied for his old job and was accepted. His employer bought a recorder machine on which he could give instructions and suggestions to Henry orally rather than by written memorandum, and he bought a braille typewriter that Henry could use to record his sales and keep his own records. Then Henry was given an office of his own.

But how could he deal with his customers, now that he was blind? How could he convince them of the quality of the flowers offered, without actually taking the flowers to them to see? The answer Henry found is an amazing example of how, with great thought of the person being dealt with, a salesman may visualize and sell his products, his services, and himself by telephone.

This is the ingenious plan that Henry worked out. He would have the flowers described to him, and by feeling them he could determine the shape and texture. This information he would then pass on by telephone to his customers.

With the help of a telephone company specialist, Henry

trained himself in effective ways of influencing people by voice and manner. In addition, he kept closely in touch with the problems and methods of the retailers. He sold from their viewpoint, in terms of their interests. He went to great lengths to learn all about exotic plants, their character and origin. These selling points he would pass along to the retailers to help them sell the flowers to their customers. Henry was a success in his new job.

Aren't there at least two important points in human relations to be noticed here? First, our personal handicaps, however great, largely disappear when we deal with people in terms of service to them. Second, in everyday use of the telephone it is possible, by conscious effort, to speak with such meaning, spirit, and consideration as to influence people favorably in our behalf.

As noted in the chapter on conversation, people communicate with one another not only by words but with facial expression and gestures and with the entire personality. Though the two parties to a telephone conversation are not seen by each other, *it is possible to turn on a sort of telephone television, by voice tone, that carries life and illuminates the meaning of the words we speak.* We thereby add a sense of seeing to the personal meeting on the telephone, and a sense of action that adds influence to what we may say in words.

"Recently we did some training in the New York Zoological Department," Mrs. Frese told me. "While there we saw the famous cockatoo that had been taught to say 'hello.' But it was pointed out in the conference that this bird could only say 'hello'; it could not put any personality or tone into that greeting. On the other hand, we human beings have the ability, if we will only use it, to carry sincerity and friendliness in our voices in talking with one another."

Cultivation of an effective telephone voice often develops into a helpful personality trait. Mrs. Frese tells of one personal

secretary in a large office whose voice on the telephone was so lifeless and flat that a friend who called the manager asked him if he were now in charge of the morgue. This incident led the secretary to take a specialized course of training in telephone usage. It not only notably improved her performance in handling telephone conversations, but helped her to develop a charming personality. Also it assisted her in other phases of her business and personal life.

Clear-cut, agreeable speech is a definite help toward leadership. A well-modulated voice adds personal charm. These attributes can be cultivated and made a part of one's personality, just as can any other good habit; that is, by practice.

"The voice is a marvelously flexible instrument," says a well-known trainer. "You can smile, you can laugh, you can glower. By neglect, you can let the voice become flat and toneless and give the listener an impression of a dry, routine, and insignificant personality.

"Always remember that the other person to the conversation is visualizing you as you talk on the telephone. What sort of picture does your voice conjure up?"

There are all sorts of telephone personalities, he points out: Mr. Grunt with his "Yeah" and "Uh huh"; Mrs. Mouse with her small indistinct squeak; Mr. and Miss Masticators with their cigar, gum, and pencil chewing; Miss Faraway with her vague off-the-mouthpiece voice; and Mr. Throat Grumble, whom you visualize, not too incorrectly, as sitting there on the back of his neck dredging up a few rumbles from the depths of a reluctant and tired torso. And, of course, on the pleasant side there's Miss Cheerful Good Morning, Mr. Brisk Rightaway, and many other agreeable people.

The difference between the dim, routine, and indifferent personalities, on the one hand, and the heart-warming ones on the other is a matter of effort, conscious effort, as in every phase of human relations. One can't afford to do just what comes

naturally, especially in telephone conversations which involve the handicap of some loss of natural tone and complete loss of actual visualization.

People can be affronted more easily than we think on the telephone. "I asked my secretary to get Joe Roseberry on the phone for me the other day," Carl Brown, a friend of ours, recently remarked, "and, whaddayuh think, the old goat was really sore because he was kept waiting a minute on the wire!"

This was what happened: Brown asked his secretary to get Roseberry on the telephone. Then Brown went into an office down the hall. The secretary put the call through. "Just a moment, Mr. Roseberry," she said, "Mr. Brown wishes to talk with you." But Mr. Brown was not to be found quickly, and the secretary said, "I'm sorry. I'll have to call you back." This she did. "Here's Mr. Brown now," she said. "Hello, hello," said Brown, coming on the wire. "Who is this? Oh, Joe, let's see; I think I was calling you about that Newark property. Wait a minute while I get the papers. . . ." But at this juncture, Joe Roseberry cut in with, "Who do you think you are that you can keep people hanging on the wire while you stall around? Get yourself organized!" And Roseberry hung up. Quite an unpleasant episode for both men.

Even in a social call it is only good manners for the person calling to come to the point at once and show consideration for the other person and the value of his or her time. In business life this is essential. Have in mind what you are going to say, how you can say it briefly and clearly. Mention the subject and main point at once. Don't open with, "Remember what we were talking about last week?" Have your thoughts organized, any records or papers at hand, and paper and pencil for note taking.

As we think, as our attitude is, so will be our telephone man-

ners. The telephone specialists offer the following list of contrasting words by which we may test ourselves.

*The Voice Having
Personal-interest Tone*

Pleasant
Friendly
Cordial
Cheerful
Interested
Helpful

*The Voice Lacking
Personal-interest Tone*

Expressionless
Mechanical
Indifferent
Impatient
Inattentive
Repelling

All the basic rules of good human relations apply to telephone usage. And many special details as well, including,

Answer the telephone promptly and speak directly into the receiver.

Identify yourself at once: "Jones Company, Miss Burnham speaking," or, if the call has been received through your company's switchboard, simply, "Miss Brown speaking." A friendly greeting, such as "Good morning, Mr. Hepner," may follow naturally when the caller identifies himself. On the telephone, as in all other phases of business, one of the pleasantest customs is to learn the name of the person you are dealing with and use it often.

If one answers for another person, the helpful thing to do is to offer one's own services, or offer to have the person being called call back.

In calling another person about a personal matter, or a business matter that may take more than ordinary time, the person called will appreciate it if we ask if this is a convenient time for him to talk. He may have visitors or may be in the midst of some matter in which quick action is essential. The housewife when called may be in the act of changing pants for the baby, or broiling a steak. Let's bear in mind the imperative nature of the telephone ring, cutting in on what a person may be doing

at the time. Let's show personal consideration for such situations.

At the conclusion of the call, each party should say good-by, rather than just hang up. Let's not be in too great a hurry to hang up. In no event, certainly, should we bang down the receiver.

In signaling the operator to transfer a call, move the receiver hook down and up *slowly* three or four times. Don't jiggle it. This consideration for the operator is a habit every person should cultivate as a regular practice.

"Enunciate clearly, mold the words in your mouth," the Bell Telephone specialists advise. Don't slur the words; speak every syllable of every word.

Speak in a natural tone of voice. Don't shout.

Don't talk too fast. The ordinary rate of around 120 words a minute will save time, on long distance just as on a local call. If you speak too fast, the listener may hear just a jumble. In ordinary speaking, a person should give each word sound the fraction of a second required for it to reverberate in his transmitter. It is even more important to speak with reasonable deliberation.

On the other hand, speaking too slowly takes the vitality out of a telephone conversation. The other party's mind is apt to wander and he may lose interest.

Realizing the nature of the telephone conversation, the New York Central Railroad System advises its people not to use slang. Don't say, for example, "all righty, sister," "nope," "yep," and such frowzy talk. A bit of dignity is appreciated by the unknown speaker on the phone.

People who constantly interrupt in telephone as in other conversations waste time for themselves and the other persons. Montgomery Ward cites this wrong- and right-way example to show how such interruptions make difficulties for everyone:

CUSTOMER: I'm Mrs. Hawkins. I placed an order Wednesday, and the girl said it should be in today. Could you . . .

ORDER GIRL: Mrs. Hawkins—just a minute . . .

ORDER GIRL (returning): Did you say Hawkins? And when was the order placed?

CUSTOMER: Yes, the name is Hawkins. I placed the order Wednesday. The girl said . . .

ORDER GIRL: Just a minute, please!

CUSTOMER: But . . .

ORDER GIRL (returning after a very long minute): Are you sure the order was placed Wednesday, Mrs. Watkins?

CUSTOMER: The name is Hawkins—H-a-w-k-i-n-s—and if you can't even remember my name for three minutes, no wonder you can't get an order in. As far as I'm concerned, you can . . .

CUSTOMER: I'm Mrs. Hawkins. I placed an order Wednesday, and the girl said it should be in today. Could you tell me if it has come in yet?

ORDER GIRL: Just a minute, Mrs. Hawkins, and I'll look it up for you. Some orders just came in, and I'll see if yours is among them. . . . Hello, Mrs. Hawkins. Your order just arrived, and we'll have it for you whenever you come in.

Waiting on the telephone is annoying to the person holding the line because he can't see why he is having to wait nor that anything is being done to cut the waiting period short. Here, again, consideration for the other fellow should come in. If you ask a person to hold the line, and there is some delay before you can get back to the telephone with the information you want to give him, he will appreciate your expression of regret. And if you find the delay may be prolonged, explain the reason for it and offer to call back.

A Montgomery Ward officer points out that complaints are opportunities and, if properly handled by telephone, may serve

to make friends instead of enemies. He illustrates the point with these contrasting examples:

CUSTOMER: The one I ordered was size ten. You sent me size eight.

ORDER GIRL (not very enthusiastically): I see. Wrong size. Want it exchanged?

CUSTOMER (furious): I certainly do. And immediately! If you had sent the right size in the first place. . . !

CUSTOMER: The one I ordered was size ten. You sent me size eight.

ORDER GIRL (sympathetically): Oh, I'm very sorry that happened. I'll be glad to make the exchange immediately. You'll have the right size just as soon as possible. Will that be satisfactory?

CUSTOMER: Why, yes, that will be fine, thanks.

ORDER GIRL: Thank you, Mrs. Black. You know, with the thousands of orders our mail-order house handles every day, some mistakes will occur. I'm just sorry this had to happen to you.

Errors are likely to creep into any conversation. In business dealings by telephone it is more than ordinarily necessary that precautions be taken to avoid mistakes. In giving new, unusual, or unfamiliar names it is well to spell them out, using a familiar word to illustrate each letter. Sears, Roebuck and Company uses this list:

A as in Alice
B as in Bertha
C as in Charles
D as in David
E as in Edward
F as in Frank
G as in George
H as in Harry
I as in Ida
J as in James
K as in Kate
L as in Louis
M as in Mary

N as in Nellie
O as in Oliver
P as in Peter
Q as in Quaker
R as in Robert
S as in Samuel
T as in Thomas
U as in Utah
V as in Victor
W as in William
X as in Xray
Y as in Young
Z as in Zebra

On the telephone, as in other human situations, people will pay us back. If we are considerate, they will be easy to deal with. If we are inconsiderate, they are apt to make things difficult for us. Good manners are more necessary in telephoning than in face-to-face conversation. A distinct, unhurried friendly voice adds efficiency and charm to every telephone conversation.

It is a profound truth that little acts of helpfulness in the routine of daily life develop great character. Instances are found in the lives of workers in all American enterprises. Let us bear in mind that great fact in considering our own lives. It will help prepare us to rise in heroic strength when the great emergency comes, as come it must to everyone.

Here is a story from the annals of telephone service that illustrates the point, simply and directly. Read the formal citation of Mrs. Mildred Lothrop, chief operator, Northwestern Bell Telephone Company, Homer, Nebraska:

"The town of Homer, Nebraska, was practically washed away by a flood in the early morning of May 31, 1920. Mrs. Lothrop lived with her five sons in the one-story building which housed the telephone central office. At about 2 o'clock in the morning Mrs. Lothrop was awakened by a signal at the switchboard. She was advised by a subscriber, who lived five miles up the valley above Homer, that there had been a cloud-burst and that the whole valley was a sheet of water. She immediately called the fire chief and several businessmen to notify them of the threatened flood. After that she commenced calling the homes of subscribers. In some instances it was necessary for her to call twice in order to impress upon the people the danger that threatened, as there had been a flood of less consequence about three weeks previous.

"While calling subscribers she sent her youngest son out into the water, which had already reached the telephone exchange, and told him to ring the fire bell, knowing that many subscrib-

ers, upon hearing the bell, would immediately call the central office. In this way she was able to advise many others to hurry to safety.

"Although the mayor and several other citizens, as well as two of her sons, urged Mrs. Lothrop to leave the switchboard, she did not leave until the board went out of commission. When she got outside, the water was up to her shoulders and the current was very swift. She and one of her sons who had stayed with her, were just able to reach the entrance to a hall above a store near at hand. For the rest of the night Mrs. Lothrop did not know whether her four other children had been drowned or not. When morning came, all her sons were found alive and unharmed. The flood lasted until about the middle of the forenoon when it began to recede. The efforts of Mrs. Lothrop in warning the people in the valley of the danger saved many lives."

For her valiant efforts in this crisis, Mrs. Lothrop was given the Vail Gold Medal Award and \$1,000.

But wait, there is more about Mrs. Lothrop. Twenty years and four days after the 1920 flood, on June 4, 1940, to be precise, another flood occurred at Homer. Mrs. Lothrop, still chief operator, again acting swiftly with cool, calm judgment, notified those in danger and even helped organize the rescue work.

"Despite the rushing waters which threatened the building and almost reached the second floor where the switchboard was located," said the second citation, "she stayed on the board many hours until the flood receded. The community credits the saving of many lives to her resourcefulness and courage." For this second service in time of emergency Mrs. Lothrop was again awarded a gold medal and \$1,000.

It may appear strange that this story of Mrs. Lothrop is included in a chapter on telephone usage. But it makes two important points:

First, it helps dispel the idea many seem to have that positions

such as that of a telephone operator are just routine jobs. In every position there lie great possibilities for helping others and at the same time for winning recognition of one's own personal worth. And, more important, the spirit of service to other people, even the attribute of great heroism may, in fact, become a habit.

Here, in summary, are a few helpful points to keep in mind when using the telephone:

1. An agreeable telephone voice and manner may win a promotion in business.
2. We can use the telephone with ease to widen our personal spheres of influence.
3. The central fact about telephone usage is that the persons talking are invisible to each other. Better than ordinary good manners, therefore, are necessary.
4. The person talking to us visualizes us, sees a picture of us. That picture is our telephone personality.
5. Let's beware of being Mr. Grunt, Mrs. Mouse, Mr. and Miss Masticator, Miss Faraway, or Mr. Throat Grumble.
6. Don't fail to say good-by. Don't jiggle the receiver, shout, mumble, talk too fast or slow, use slovenly talk, interrupt, or keep people waiting.
7. Consideration for others and small acts of service, as habits in everyday telephone usage, will work powerfully for us with people.

CHAPTER NINE

Make a Speech and Feel No Pain

“And now, gentlemen, it is my great pleasure to present to you Mr. John Reader!”

The awful moment has arrived. Six weeks ago with sweetly diplomatic words picturing the ease with which you would speak in a mildly glamorous scene, the committee of the Men’s Business Club of Midvale had got your commitment. Too late to retreat now!

You rise deliberately from your chair, take your place behind the table, thanking the good Lord there is something between you and the audience. Standing tall but relaxed you pause a moment, taking plenty of time in this pause. You size up your audience. Sure, they’re sizing you up, too; but you don’t mind that. You have a very definite purpose in being there. You know that main point you’re going to put over. You have a feeling of knowing your subject better than anyone in the audience; at least, you have thought it out more carefully.

But you are pretty nervous. You know action will help, so you move the gavel to the side, rearrange the papers before you. Then you smile at your audience, take a good deep breath and begin:

“Mr. Chairman and Fellow Human Beings:

"We are going to consider together briefly now the subject of 'The Human Touch in Business.'

"So it is for a special purpose that I address this group of the leading businessmen of Midvale as *human beings*; and I admit that my use of the term 'fellow human beings' is my hopeful attempt to have you consider me human as well, if that is not too much to be expected.

"But let's not, you nor I, as businessmen, be too sure of our status in public opinion as human beings, in the sense that human beings are expected to be humane.

"We have all noted, I am sure, that business, and those engaged in it, have come to be 'institutionalized' in the minds of most people. That is a large awkward word, but I use it to indicate that business organizations, especially if they are big, and businessmen are thought of as being unhuman. They are thought of as being remote from the daily lives, the needs and desires and the personal welfare of the average worker or even of professional men or women. They have become symbols—high, remote, and often sinister. In short, business organizations seem to have lost the human touch.

"This is important to you and to me, to everyone in business, because the public can put us out of business if it is hostile. Our own companies will be constantly in costly turmoil, internally as well as externally, if we are not understood to be operating in keeping with the good of individual human beings.

"Understanding other people and having them understand us is important in every phase of our lives. It is important to you and to me in our home lives, in rearing our children, in making friends. It means to each one of us, in the most personal sense, the difference between happiness and unhappiness, the difference between success and failure.

"But today we are to consider the more limited field of human relations in business life. I invite you to join me in having a good clear look at this problem. Let's see if the cure does not

largely lie in putting more humanity into the little, everyday details of human relationships in business, in lubricating the in-human business machine with a little human friendliness.

"For example, the Hancock Motor Works started as a small-family operation with old Jim Hancock and his two boys. . . ." et cetera.

Well, you're off to a start with your speech; and with your central purpose always clearly in mind you probably will do all right.

It is difficult to cite an example of an effective speech because each must depend upon the make-up of the audience, the speaker, the subject, the atmosphere, and all the conditions under which the talk is made. Mr. Reader's method of approach and the opening have, however, these virtues:

A deliberate and poised physical approach. When Mr. Reader rises *slowly* from his chair, walks *deliberately* to the speaker's stand, pauses *deliberately* as he looks over the audience, he obviously has himself well in hand. So, the audience feels, he must also have his subject well in hand. The people in the audience relax, just as a dog, a horse, or a child relaxes when one approaches slowly, confidently, without any sudden or ill-controlled action.

Moving a few objects on the table, any physical movement, before speaking, relieves nervous tension. We know an excellent speaker who, in beginning a speech, holds a pencil in his hands. In beginning, he is always so nervous he does not dare hold his notes because the shaking notepaper would be seen by everyone. He turns the pencil slowly around as he begins to talk. After he gets under way, and his nervousness disappears, he puts the pencil away.

Taking a very deep breath before beginning to speak is another strictly physical action that is of prime importance. If the words are to come out of the mouth with strength and firmness, you must have behind them a pack of air that goes clear

down to the diaphragm. The diaphragm is a strong curtain of muscle and cartilage that separates the chest from the abdomen. Normal breathing ought to go down to the diaphragm and be controlled by the diaphragm. In public speaking it is even more an essential that we have this very full body of air to work with. This will avert the possibility of an opening squeak, which is so devastating to the speaker and so disconcerting to the audience. It will avert the tremolo in the voice that is just about as bad.

Now as to what Mr. John Reader says in his opening:

He says, "Mr. Chairman," or equivalent, because it is simple conventional politeness to acknowledge the introduction. He may also acknowledge the presence of any other person or persons who ought to be recognized by name or title or both, because circumstances justify it.

It will be noted that Mr. Reader varied the salutation with the phrase, "fellow human beings." This is an incidental suggestion that Elisabeth Ferguson von Hesse, the speech trainer of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and other famous folk, makes in her book, "So to Speak." This phrase seems to fit in well with Mr. Reader's topic of "Human Relations in Business," so we use it as an example of the many variations that a speaker can and should make in departing from the stereotyped "Mr. Chairman, and Ladies and Gentlemen." Observe the conventions as far as necessary, but try for a fresh, challenging start. Give the people you are speaking to any designation you may consider appropriate and pleasing.

In every phase of human relations we have seen how essential it is that we recognize the importance of other people. In no human situation is that more important than in making a speech. It is the conventional thing to do in making a speech. One should usually go considerably further in speechmaking than in personal conversation to make the audience feel good. Mr. Reader does very well to refer to his audience right near

the opening as "*leading* businessmen." Mr. Reader knows what he's about when he does that, because having people with you emotionally is more important even than what you say. It is quite an absolute must. For if they don't like you, if they're against you personally, if they think you're trying to build yourself up without recognizing their importance, you are all through at the start. If the people in the audience do not like you, they will not like what you say.

The speaker may well beware of excuses and alibis. Particularly he shouldn't begin by saying something to the effect that, "I'm sorry our president couldn't be here tonight as he had another important engagement. Our first vice-president is ill, so while I am not so familiar with the subject as they, I shall do the best I can," and so on.

Right here let's agree we'll never flout the importance of the audience by indicating that another person, more important than we, failed to show up. Let's resolve never to recount all the important people who couldn't come to the meeting. All such remarks are apt to be interpreted by the audience as indicating that the important people didn't consider this particular audience, including ME, the individual person in the audience, as of sufficient importance for the big shots to show up. This is not only dispiriting, but may be quite bitterly resented by the audience.

Mr. Reader did very well, too, right in the beginning of his talk to indicate what he was going to discuss and especially how it vitally concerned the individuals in the group. The subject should always be related to the hearers' interests within the first minute of the talk. It should be stated that what the speaker has to say will benefit them personally, will help them make or save money, or will help their families, or give them some fun. Say it outright, specify the benefits so that there can be no mistake.

Then Mr. Reader very properly begins to illustrate, to give

examples. Examples should comprise nearly all the body of the talk. You can get points over to people only in terms of people. Very few people are interested in abstract principles. Only student-type people, of which there are relatively few, and people already well versed in the subject can understand a dissertation on principles. At least, they will be little inclined to make the effort to understand.

In explanation the speaker should proceed from the familiar to the new. It's quite all right to shock people with a novel idea right off the bat, if that technique is used only to explode them from their lethargy. On occasion, a speech may be effectively opened with such a new and startling statement as advocated by Richard C. Borden in his lively book, "Public Speaking as Listeners Like It." But if one is seeking to explain or persuade, he should proceed from the things or beliefs that are familiar to or accepted by his hearers, bit by bit, to the new understanding or conviction that the speaker desires his listeners to have.

In a speech aimed at persuasion, the effort may well be along the lines of the old precept, "Let the facts speak for themselves." If a speaker can put together the commonly accepted facts relating to a problem or situation in such a way that the conclusion is inescapable, he has really done a masterful job of persuasion. People, as has been noted so often in this book, do not want to have their opinions changed—not by anyone but themselves. This applies in large degree even to those people who pride themselves on their open-mindedness and who are eager to progress or to be up to date in their attitudes and thinking. None of us can help feeling that what we think is pretty much all right. So, with all people, in a speech aimed at persuasion, we will do well to present an array of facts that lead the listeners inevitably to the conclusion we wish them to accept. A talk aimed at presenting an argument in favor of a proposition should sound factual, not argumentative in tone.

The principle applies with equal force to writing designed to persuade.

Of course, facts should not be made to sound dull. Someone said "statistics are the lowest form of information." It's a safe rule not to use a lot of complicated figures, even when speaking to a convention of statisticians. But a few simple and significant figures serve, as the newspapermen say, "to make the story stand up."

The speaker must also entertain his hearers. The purpose of a speech is to inform, to persuade, or to entertain, it is said. But we agree with Mrs. von Hesse that every speech, having one of these as a principal purpose, should do all three: inform, persuade, and entertain.

The modern trend seems to be away from opening or illustrating speeches with funny stories. A humorous comment or quaint remark on the immediate scene or related directly to the audience is to be preferred to the story about the two Irishmen. However, sometimes a funny story of general application may be so pat to the subject that it can be used with good effect. Sometimes, when the purpose is outstandingly to entertain, one may use many stories.

If you are going to tell such a funny story, this single suggestion is offered: The main thing to keep keenly in mind is the final pay-off. This is always something ridiculous or unexpected, and it should come at the very end of the last sentence, with the last word or words. Bang these words out clearly, for no matter how explosive the joke, it is a fizzle if the audience doesn't hear the pay-off.

Regardless of funny stories, every speech should be made as entertaining as possible. Trite, commonplace words are to be avoided. Every speech should have the lift of a few colorful, picturesque phrases.

Following the body of the speech, the speaker briefly sums

up the main points, draws his conclusions clearly, and presents his final appeal.

So it may be seen that the basic pattern of a speech is quite in line with the old country preacher's plan: "Fust I tells 'em what I'm goina tell 'em, then I tells 'em, an' fin'ly I tells 'em what I tol' 'em."

And the close of the speech should always be strong, in many cases dramatic.

Artificial, stilted attitudes and gestures of the Delsarte school are, of course, too outdated to be effective now. The informal, almost conversational method is the most effective for most occasions. But at the same time there is a difference between a speech and a conversation, just as there is between writing and conversation. There must be a little formalism at times, and virtually always a bit more force. George Bernard Shaw, the playwright, himself a veteran speaker from soapbox and platform, used the significant expression, "the athletic articulation of the practiced speaker." The speaker generally should put more drive and sweeping power into his speech than he would in personal conversation.

There is a place for the dramatic address, too. Who can doubt that the vast dramatic power of Winston Churchill swayed not only Britain but a large part of the rest of the world in the late war? But balancing that off, let's bear in mind the persuasive appeal of the fireside chats of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The speaker will naturally adopt the style best suited to his subject and to his own personality.

Now, briefly, a few practical suggestions:

Never read a speech, unless before a radio microphone where every split second counts. In such a radio presentation, make every effort to avoid the cut-and-dried delivery that is the curse of read speeches.

Don't use many notes. It's a safe bet that nobody but you

will notice if you leave out a third of your talk. A speech cannot be too short.

Thorough preparation is the main assurance of a successful speech. The people in your audience want to feel they are getting something from your very inner spirit. They hate the thought of a "canned" talk. Never memorize a speech. You may memorize the opening and closing sentences, if desired, and, at the very least, you must have these quite definitely in mind. But, aside from these, have only a few simple notes made up of key words; preferably on a single card you can hold in your hand. If you can dispense with reference to any notes whatever, your audience will be better pleased. For the audience likes to feel, emotionally, that you are "full of your subject" and that you are pouring it out with great sincerity.

But, with this seeming spontaneity, the speech must be tightly organized. Repetition is boring: avoid "As I said before," "as the previous speaker said," and such soporifics.

Every speech should have a high spot. It should not run clear through on the same tonal or emotional level, whether that level be high or low. Vary the tone of voice; change the pace in speed of speaking; "pause for effect" before or after a telling point. And somewhere in the speech, normally toward the latter part, the speaker should really "get hot" and drive hard on the main point. Yes, even pound the table, if you wish. Let go with any gesture that comes naturally. In this connection, don't think about gesturing. Gestures are important, but they must come out of a natural bodily movement.

Speak to everybody in the room, especially to those in the back rows. It's rather disconcerting to have someone in the audience shout "louder!" But if that happens, don't be disturbed. Smile, and speak out more firmly. Speak to everybody in the room, to those on this side, then that. Don't let one section of your audience feel neglected.

Finally, and probably most important, when we're called

upon to make a speech, let's approach it with a feeling of *talk-ing with* the audience, not to them. We may say it outright, in so many words; or we may imply it in our manner. But, in any event, it is very important that the listeners have the feeling of thinking along with the speaker. Our attitude of considering his viewpoint with "Doesn't that make sense?" or "Isn't that your observation?" may help to carry our listeners with us.

Nearly all of the foregoing has to do with the techniques of speechmaking. But far more important than any or all of the methods is the requirement that the speaker must have something to say—something that is of importance or significance to the particular audience he is addressing.

Finally, in making a speech, let's remember and apply the basic rule for all human relationships: Think, speak, and act in terms of other people's interests.

If you keep these suggestions in mind, you will feel no pain, and your audiences will feel very little:

1. Be natural, informal, relaxed, and deliberate.
2. Breathe deeply so that you will have a good supply of air to start off with.
3. Don't start with apologies or alibis for others.
4. Recognize the importance of your audience, in attitude and in words.
5. Relate your subject to the personal interests of your listeners in the beginning.
6. Pack the body of your speech with illustrations and examples, talking in terms of people, so far as possible, rather than in abstract principles or statistics.
7. Try to make people like you. If they don't like you, they will not like what you say.
8. Don't read or memorize your speech. Let it flow naturally out of your mind and heart. Avoid lengthy notes. Thorough preparation will make this possible.

9. Every speech should inform, persuade, and entertain—but have one of these as the principal purpose.
10. To persuade, proceed from existing beliefs of your hearers, step by step, to the new conviction you wish them to accept.
11. When you reach the main point of your speech, “get hot,” drive it home hard.
12. Summarize your points rapidly at the end and close with a strong sentence.

PART THREE

How to Win People's Help in Business

CHAPTER 10 Helping the Customer Buy

CHAPTER 11 How Your Associates Pay You Back

CHAPTER 12 Why the Boss Is That Way

CHAPTER 13 The Supervisor Gets Results through
Leadership

CHAPTER TEN

Helping the Customer Buy

"You'll excuse me, sonny, if I seem a little slow," said the man with the bushy eyebrows to the young salesman in a Denver department store. "That super-go-getter salesman who just worked out on me was awful sure he knew just what I wanted. But I wasn't even sure myself. He got impatient and was pushing me pretty hard, so I told him to run along."

"You take your time," the young salesman replied. "We have almost everything in this big store. I know the stock and I'll help you find just what you want."

Mr. Bushy Brows looked up from the bedsprings he was inspecting, the beginning of a smile on his face. "Looks like you and I are going to get along all right," he said.

The young salesman did get along all right with this customer. He showed the full line of beds, springs, and bedding in his department. He found the customer wanted quality—not premium stuff, but durable items at a medium price. The salesman suggested but did not urge. He took the time to find out what the customer's problems and personal preferences were. He showed a genuine, lively interest in helping solve those problems. Mr. Bushy Brows, it developed, was outfitting a camp near Monarch. He had a ranch at Boulder, another in Jackson county, as well as other properties. He needed clothing, bedding, furniture, hardware, paint—dozens of items. Be-

fore he left, after the second day in the store, he had purchased something more than \$3,000 worth of goods—all from the young salesman who, at the customer's request, accompanied him from department to department.

The first salesman had tried to sell Mr. Bushy Brows some merchandise. The young salesman tried to help him buy. There's a lot of difference in the two methods—between high-pressure and low-pressure selling. The former is sometimes the quicker, but it makes the work of the salesman harder and it does not create repeat customers.

Your job may not be selling, and you may wonder why you should be interested in this chapter. The answer is: Everyone is a salesman. Every day, in every human contact, every person is making or losing a sale of his own personal worth that influences his promotion or demotion and affects his value as a friend or associate.

Let Dr. George W. Crane answer the question in more detail: "You must sell yourself to your superior, else you'll never get promoted," he points out. "You must sell yourself to your sweetheart, or you'll never win a mate. You must sell yourself to your acquaintances, or you'll be left out of the social whirl and become friendless. You must sell yourself to your children, or they'll dislike you, and look back to you in after years with bitterness and anger. Life is a game of continuous salesmanship."

Everyone has a selling job to do, and, consciously, or more often unconsciously, everyone is working at it. In this chapter retail selling is specifically dealt with, but the principles and practices discussed may be helpfully applied in the human relations of everyone.

Successful merchandisers have come to realize that selling involves the whole scope of the art of getting along with people. All the deep-seated elements of human nature are concerned in selling. Let's look at one or two here at the beginning.

Analysis of the art of persuasion shows that everyone resents change of opinion. We have dealt with that before. People accept new ideas only in terms of adding to their existing convictions. These beliefs may be modified as they go along in a discussion and, finally, the once firmly held convictions may be abandoned. But everyone objects to an abrupt about-face.

Many salesmen have by long experience developed the "yes" technique which falls in with this general principle. They ask questions that bring the "yes" response, finally leading the customer to an affirmative state of mind and willingness to buy.

But however effective it may be, this is only a shallow application of a basic phase of human nature. People accept new ideas or courses of action only in terms of the ideas they already hold. Their minds wheel around very slowly. So a good rule is: *Begin the sale in terms of the customer's opinions and what he believes to be facts.*

At no stage in the selling process does the customer want to feel that his mind is being changed. He wants to make up his mind himself. But he will welcome a suggestion for his consideration—a mild suggestion. Psychologists point out that people are highly "suggestible" but that they resent commands, such as "Buy now!" So let's bear in mind the *powerful influence of a mild suggestion.*

Naturally, you've seen high-power selling methods work. Let's admit that forcing methods do sometimes get results. Certainly it may be noted that every good salesman is active. But forcing methods do not build up a following of repeat customers.

On the other hand, the timid one cannot succeed in selling. He must have confidence in the merchandise or service that he is offering, and he must offer it with enthusiasm. The customer assumes the salesman knows thoroughly what he's selling. If the salesman is uncertain about it, the customer will hesitate to buy. But if the salesman is sincerely enthusiastic in showing

and demonstrating the goods or service, the only thing needed at the moment of closing the sale is a mild suggestion.

With these principles in mind let's get down to the day-to-day practice of the person selling at retail, at a fixed place of business.

The first great obstacle to successful selling over the counter is the tendency of the salesman to consider himself an order taker instead of a man with an active job of selling to do.

This is no routine job. Over-the-counter selling requires the same sort of active thinking and resourcefulness that is required in going-to-the-customer selling. Jobs such as that of the retail salesman, the railroad ticket agent, or the oil company service station salesman are vital to the business. By that we mean the business will grow or will die, according to how well or poorly these jobs are performed.

The second obstacle is the tendency of the salesman to try to make the sale from his standpoint or the standpoint of the firm, instead of from the viewpoint of the customer. The old-time high-pressure method of seeking to impose your will on the customer is the hard way to sell. General Motors was one of the leading firms in going all the way in low-pressure selling, which is finding out what the customer wants and making and giving him what he wants.

Reginald H. Biggs, Managing Director of The Emporium in San Francisco, says, "Selling is the art of helping your customer to buy—discovering her needs, then advising and guiding her to the selection which best fills that need."

Practice of the art of selling is fascinating if one is interested in people, and the salesman is not doing right by himself if he doesn't enjoy it.

Let us recount the observation of a saleswoman who had spent nearly all her life—quite enjoyably—in retail sales work. She said she had stopped in during her lunch hour one day at a little shop where only shelled nuts were sold. The girl who

waited on her was so full of smiles and interest, and seemed to like her job and the customers so much, the saleswoman fell to thinking of another young girl, Susan, in her own department. Susan always seemed to have such a hard time, and yet her job was much more interesting than that of the girl at the nut shop.

After work that evening she spoke to Susan.

"How goes the job?" she asked.

"Not so good," Susan replied. "Mr. Jones (the department head) called me down, my feet are aching, and the customers were terrible today."

"But meeting people should be pleasant work," our friend remarked. "Lots of people in other jobs would like to get into it."

"What can a person do when things are always going wrong?"

"Well, first you ought to keep yourself well and comfortable. Maybe you need different shoes, or perhaps more fresh air in the evening, or a change in diet.

"But the main thing is to smile. Oh, I know," she continued, "that's an old saw, but it's really true. A smile may be quite as much a *cause* of your good humor as the result of your good humor."

What this adviser said is supported by the studies of William James and many another psychologist since. The muscles remember emotions, telegraph them through the nerves to the brain, and the emotional reaction follows. For example, as to the emotion of fear, James says, (1) we see a bear, (2) we start to run, and then (3) we are afraid. With some oversimplification we may apply this to the everyday selling job and say that (1) we see a customer or other person, (2) we smile, and then (3) we feel good.

"Try it and see," the saleswoman urged Susan. "Smile, and you will feel good. Try it until your smiling muscles get the

habit of telling your brain, 'I'm happy.' A smile will even help your aching feet. Try it on Mr. Jones, and you'll find the effect in making him human will be little less than startling."

Susan did try it on Mr. Jones. It would be nice to report that a happy romance developed as a result, but the situation didn't work out that way. However, Susan did get a surprising and very pleasant reaction from Mr. Jones. "He speaks and smiles at me like I'm a human being and not just another salesgirl," she told her friend. Encouraged by this first success, Susan found a way to create friendly relations with other fellow employees and her customers, and her work became a pleasure instead of drudgery.

Lots of sentimental things have been said and written about a smile, but its plain, practical value is there, easy to prove. Anyone can gain almost miraculous results for himself by personal experiment in smiling. Smile at that face you see in the mirror in the morning. Note how those drooping face muscles come alive. Smile at your wife or husband across the breakfast table, or at the waitress in the restaurant. What a surprise to them! What a pleasant surprise is their reaction to you! Smile when you greet your fellow workers. Smile at the customers. Note the result in their attitude toward you. The habit of smiling is the most important single technique in acquiring a magiclike touch in human relations. Its effectiveness in the process of selling can scarcely be overestimated.

Most training courses in, and books on, salesmanship are not designed for people selling at a fixed place of business. They are for those who go out to make sales calls at offices or homes. Such retail sales discussions as are now available are designed for sales managers.

In this discussion, however, we will deal with the successes, trials, and tribulations of the people who actually handle retail sales transactions. Think along with us as we apply the usual six-point sales formula to retail selling:

1. Making the proper approach.
2. Securing favorable attention.
3. Arousing interest.
4. Creating desire.
5. Answering objections.
6. Closing the sale.

This, of course, is in no case a rigid formula. It is subject to all sorts of modifications.

No part of the selling process is more important than the approach—the opening move in dealing with the customer.

A “seller’s market” existed all through the Second World War and for some time after. The greatest breakdown of selling manners and methods in the history of the country occurred during this period. People were in such dire need of goods and so many things were lacking, that selling became a lost art. A proper approach to the customer was considered, by most, to be a waste of time.

Lost especially was the warm welcome to the prospective customer. How many customers, upon asking for a common article such as a white shirt or pair of nylons, were rebuffed with a short, “No, we haven’t any,” or worse, with a supercilious look that implied, “You poor dumb creature, don’t waste my time.”

People have long memories. Long will they remember, and avoid, the salesmen and places of business that belittled and affronted them. On the other hand, they will long remember those salespeople who, lacking the goods desired, showed interest in the customer, expressed sincere regret at lack of merchandise, and suggested good substitutes and how they might be obtained.

The old-time welcome has, with increasing production and competition, returned as a basic principle of modern business. And this helps everyone; for there is no better training in the

art of getting along with people in social and family life, in every human activity, than the application of this primary phase of selling—the friendly welcome to the customer.

The standard approach in many up-to-date stores is the inquiry, "May I help you?" and there is no doubt this is a vast improvement over "Something for you?" However, some specialists in over-the-counter selling now advise salesmen not to ask opening questions, because, they say, shyness of a customer may lead to a first negative response. If the customer says "no," that may be the end of it; you may have lost the sale, they point out. Seven times out of ten, according to these sales managers, the customer will respond, "No, I'm just looking"—which often means good-by to that sale.

Better, they advise, just say "Good morning" or "Good afternoon" in a friendly way. Regardless of the actual words used in the greeting, the important thing is to smile and *give the customer a welcoming, expectant look*. In any event, the smart salesman will use the words that seem most natural and appealing, whether it be "May I help you?" or just "Good morning."

If the customer has paused to look at a certain item, most sales trainers agree that the salesman can make no better approach than to remark that the item is "interesting," "attractive," or "unusual," or make a more specific comment, and pick it up, demonstrate it and, if practicable, hand it to the customer. The details of this procedure depend on the character of the item and other circumstances.

The customer may approach by telephone. People who answer the phone find it pays to cultivate the habit of speaking softly but clearly. Ar-tic-u-late plainly. Let the voice indicate a personal interest in the caller, remembering that boredom and indifference are always reflected in the voice and that they repel everyone.

So, from the beginning to the end of every sale, these factors

are involved: our appearance, knowledge of the product, poise, and our response to the attitude of the prospect. Above all, the sincerity and intensity of our interest in the customer should be evident. Timing, emotions, and all phases of personality enter into salesmanship.

We can learn much from the experience of highly skilled salesmen who go out and call on prospects.

"Confidence is vital in the approach," a successful insurance salesman once told us. "The largest sale I had ever made was for a \$5,000 policy. I was afraid to suggest large policies. One day a man asked me about a \$50,000 policy. I was so scared and excited that I came near losing it. But from that day on I began looking for big policies, and I have sold a lot of them."

Confidence is important in selling at retail, but customers dislike a salesman who appears cocky or arrogant or who talks too much. Under no circumstances should we be "high hat," talk down to the prospect, or indicate that we know more than he does, even though that may be a fact. Don't belittle the customer.

In fact, the importance of the customer must always be recognized as a first consideration. For one thing, no single technique in selling is more important than learning the customer's name and using it often. To know and use customers' names is most helpful to the salesman in attracting a personal following.

A classic example is Marshall Field who, about a century ago, built his own customer relationships by standing in the main aisle of his great Chicago store and welcoming customers by name.

The second step in our six-point sales formula is: "Secure favorable attention." Attention is a foregone conclusion with the ticket agent, the salesman in a department store, people in oil company service stations. People come to them to seek information or to make purchases. However, by skillfully direct-

ing that attention one can often make sales in addition to those the customer originally had in mind. Retail store managers consider supplementary sales highly important. Good salesmanship, however, does not include selling the customer things he does not need.

In the first showing of merchandise to the customer, the effective salesman will offer a medium-priced item. Showing a very expensive item may repulse the customer who cannot afford it. Also, a very inexpensive item may affront the customer who is ready to pay for the highest priced.

You can't always judge by the dress or appearance of the customer how much he can or will pay. Let's document the point with a story told by Miss Jean Coman, trainer in salesmanship in San Francisco:

"In a large department store in Sacramento, an unattractively dressed elderly woman came into the millinery department a few minutes before closing time. All the salesgirls rushed out of sight to the stockroom, which generally they avoided. The store's buyer, seeing the situation, approached the customer pleasantly and began to show her the merchandise she asked for.

"At the next department meeting, the buyer told them about his customer with whom he had remained nearly an hour after the store had closed. The customer who was going abroad, purchased clothing for herself and relatives in war-torn Europe. The commission, which might have been made by any one of the salesgirls, was well over \$100, a fair return for a little overtime and courtesy, I would say."

Timing is important. You can't get favorable attention if the prospect is afraid he'll miss a train or if he is late for an appointment or in a bad frame of mind. Under such circumstances it is better to let him go and wait for a future opportunity.

The third and fourth steps in our sales formula are: "Arouse interest" and "create desire." The crux of the sale is to show

that the customer's needs are met by what you have to sell. Associate the product with his feeling of pride, his desire for comfort, convenience, or economy. Study the customer intently. If you are uncertain as to which of these he is most interested in, induce him to talk. Listen carefully. One of these considerations will be uppermost in his mind.

If the merchandise or service does not, in fact, meet the customer's need, we should pass up a sale. We should say frankly and regretfully that we do not have what he wants. We should volunteer to order it for him, if that is possible. Some salesmen even go so far as to suggest another firm that may have it. The salesman makes a friend for himself and for his company by such personal interest in the customer.

After the customer indicates the quality of the product or phase of the service he is most interested in, you should hold him to that point. Mention the qualities that will help solve his problem or satisfy his desires. Do not be too positive; perhaps suggest it with a question. On the other hand, the successful salesman is always enthusiastic. His enthusiasm for his merchandise communicates itself to the customer. John J. McGrath, manager of the executive training department of Macy's in New York, tells this incident, an experience of small consequence financially, but long remembered as an example of personal salesmanship.

In the window of a small shop in Columbus, Georgia, Mr. McGrath saw an attractive necktie. He entered the shop and asked to see the tie. Note how clearly he remembered the details of this transaction:

"The man who waited on me," Mr. McGrath reports, "was apparently the owner, an elderly chap, friendly and courteous. He removed the tie from the display case as if it were a three-day-old child—with care, respect, and, I think, some affection. He placed it gently on the counter in front of me. He spoke convincingly of its good qualities. He set it against my coat to

show the good color contrast. Again he placed it neatly on the counter in front of me. How could I say no? Clearly this merchandise must be good, for here was a man who knew about it, whose every act showed me the regard in which he held it. His respect for the merchandise was contagious. I wanted to buy the tie. With some fear as to what the price might be, I told him that I'd take it. He carefully wrapped it and placed it in my hands as if it were a precious gem. 'That will be \$1.28,' he said. I need hardly say the point of this story is that salesmen should demonstrate respect and enthusiasm for merchandise if they expect the customer to buy."

Also observe, this salesman was very active. Physical movement arouses interest and holds the customer's attention. Note the detail of the action of this salesman in displaying and demonstrating the merchandise. Enthusiasm and action put life into the selling process.

On the other hand, nothing is more likely to lose sales than lack of enthusiasm and action on the part of the salesman. We are talking about the salesman who lays a piece of merchandise on the counter in front of the customer, but says nothing and does nothing.

The reason the customer shrugs and walks away from a situation of that kind lies a lot deeper than the casual observer would think. Nearly always the customer feels insulted. Yes, we mean *insulted*. It is incredible how touchy people are. It is incredible how they crave recognition of their importance; how they crave it from a salesman whom they never saw before. It is incredible how many customers will just walk away, regardless of the worth of the merchandise to them, when the salesman seems indifferent.

Assuming that you have successfully aroused the customer's interest and created a desire, we come to point five of the sales formula: Answering objections.

When the prospect is satisfied the product will substantially

meet his needs, he will ask the price to determine whether or not he would rather (1) have the product, (2) keep the money, or (3) use the money for something else. At that time he is likely to bring up some objections.

Objections are the salesman's opportunity, because the prospect has shown initial interest.

The skilled salesman never disputes an objection directly. Many repeat the objection clearly to let the customer understand beyond doubt that the objection is understood. A salesman may even compliment him for bringing up the point or admit that in certain circumstances his objection would be justified.

Then the salesman comes back to the main advantage of what he offers for sale. He points out the success others have had with the product. If the customer objects to the price, he helps him summarize all the values and weigh them fairly against the cost. All these procedures are merely suggested. They should be modified to fit the particular situation. Such procedures are optional.

But, in answering objections, emotional control is a must. A loud, overriding voice or manner is fatal. We must not assume any attitude that might be interpreted as arguing with the customer. Remember, we are simply helping him make the best possible purchase to fill his needs.

The final step is "closing the sale." It should not be attempted unless we are satisfied that the customer is ready to buy. This is the time to focus attention on the one best quality of the one best selection for the customer, and not let the attention waver.

Many successful salesmen avoid a direct closing question that might force a "no" answer. They find that a mildly affirmative suggestion, such as merely picking up an order book, is better. Others ask such questions as, "Do you wish one or two?" "Do you wish to use cash or make out a check?" "When may we make delivery?" This method is to be used only where

it fits the situation naturally. Remember the smart child who, trying to persuade his father to permit him to go to a show, asked him if it would be better for him to go to the show tonight or tomorrow night?

Nothing is more important in the selling process than for the salesman to act decisively and with perfect timing when the customer appears ready to buy. This does not mean, however, that the decisive, well-timed action need be in any degree a rough or forcing action. You can be tactful and bring a sale to a close just as quickly and definitely by indirect action as you can by a direct request to buy. As we saw above, merely picking up the order book and looking at the customer expectantly is often the most effective way to close a sale.

An experience with an automobile insurance salesman who recently called at our office illustrates the method of avoiding the "no" response. At the same time, it seems in line with the whole process of easy selling.

"About the renewal of your personal indemnity automobile policy for next year," said the salesman. "I am wondering if you still have one member of your family living in your home who is under twenty-five years of age."

"No," we replied. "Our only child, a boy of nineteen, is now away in the army."

"Well," the salesman said, "that will reduce the premium by \$3.18.

"But, of course," he continued, smiling sympathetically, "this line of insurance, like practically everything else, has gone up. On this policy the increase would be \$6.45, but deducting \$3.18, there's a net increase of \$3.27 over this year. That makes the premium for the next year \$36.40."

He smiled expectantly. He was a very pleasant fellow. We smiled back. He said, "Thanks a lot," and left.

In a few days, when we received the new policy, we mailed in a check for \$36.40, and the sale was completed. But for the

life of us we couldn't say just when or at what stage we had been sold.

It's worth noting again that people do not like to feel they are pressed at any stage in making a purchase. In fact they don't like to be sold; they like to buy.

"Customers," says O. Preston Robinson, Associate Professor of Retailing, New York University, in his "Successful Retail Salesmanship," "like to think of salesmanship as courteous, intelligent service that helps them buy needed merchandise more conveniently, economically, and wisely. . . . Selling methods should be devoid of all evident effort to sell." *

Finally, after closing a sale, the salesman sends the customer away with a lively anticipation of enjoying what he has purchased. "I know you will enjoy the dress," says the saleswoman. "You are going to have an interesting trip," says this ticket seller. Let's remember that the customer has not bought just an article of clothing or transportation. The customer has also bought satisfaction in the use of the purchase. Our expression of confidence in the pleasure and satisfaction that will come from such use actually adds a very real value. Our pleasant parting remark will be remembered by the customer as a reason to return to us again.

Whether selling gasoline, safety pins, or real estate, or selling your services to someone who may hire you, the six-step standard selling formula may prove a helpful guide.

The sound principles of selling things or services apply equally to selling ideas. Haven't you noticed that people will accept an idea only in terms of their own interests, only when it is offered in such a way as to make it easy for them to readjust the ideas they already hold with the new ideas you seek to sell?

Good principles mean nothing unless put into action. We

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can accept and daydream about the precepts of good salesmanship yet accomplish nothing. Only action counts.

The art of selling involves the whole range of human relations, but these specific points speed sales and make the work pleasant:

1. Approach your customer with an attitude of personal interest.
2. Learn your prospect's wishes by asking questions and by being observant. Use his main desire as the main selling point.
3. Avoid argument. Answer objections with a suggestion or question that points up the main benefits to the customer.
4. Close the sale with a suggestion or question that leaves the choice with the customer but implies the purchase.
5. Send the customer away with a smile and a lively anticipation of enjoying the purchase he has made.
6. *Always sell in terms of the customer's interests.*

CHAPTER ELEVEN

How Your Associates Pay You Back

The personal secretary and assistant of a vice-president in a large institution in Philadelphia was a woman approaching middle age. During the fifteen years she had been there she had grown self-centered. Her sense of power in speaking for the vice-president led her to inconsiderate treatment—often harsh treatment—of fellow workers.

The vice-president died. The new vice-president found lack of harmony and teamwork in the organization. He inquired about the cause. Most of her associates blamed her. She was dismissed.

Yet she had unusual ability. She was a good character in every respect except in her lack of thoughtfulness for others. Only a few of her fellow workers knew that the mother whom she supported was sick, irritable, and that the mother's acid temperament had helped spoil the daughter's disposition. And those few didn't care. Nobody cared about the reason. All they cared about was that she was "hard to get along with." A few told her that; but, of course, she did not believe it to be true.

After dismissal from the institution that she had served so long—and so faithfully—she went from job to job. As this is

written, she holds a position that pays little more than half the salary of the job she had held so long.

Said Dr. William J. Reilly, personnel specialist, in an article in *American Business* for June, 1947:

"Every time I analyze a batch of 'exit interviews' I am reminded all over again that the failure of an employee is seldom due to his lack of ability. An analysis I just completed showed that 84 per cent of these failures could be attributed to faulty human relations. . . . And this is typical."

There are three elements of success in any job, Dr. Reilly points out: (1) our *desire* to work at the job, (2) our *ability* to do the job, (3) *our capacity for getting along with the people we work with*.

People with ability may get by for years on their jobs in spite of their bad human relations. However, promotion to a supervisory job, where they have to get results through other people, often results in disaster.

Take the case of two men we know who worked in different departments of the same large corporation. Each was a technical specialist. Each turned out his work in almost perfect detail. These were conscientious, skilled men; but, obviously, neither had given a thought to relationships with fellow workers. They did their work, and if anyone interrupted them, the interrupter was snarled at.

Their skill eventually led to their promotions as managers of their respective offices within the same year. Neither stayed on the office manager's job more than a few months. Their sarcasm, their direct commands without suggestions or helpful advice, and their explosive reprimands for every failure of a fellow employee kept their offices in a turmoil.

Each was put back on a specialist's job. But their stories do not end here. About five years after his demotion one of these men died of a stomach ailment, an illness now generally considered by physicians to be caused by nervous irritations.

The other eventually was permanently weakened by "heart trouble."

Such tragic cases are not rare. People who fail to develop the ability to get along well with others seldom get along well with themselves. Too often they add breakdown in health to business failure.

Twenty-five years ago a man we know took a job in the engineering department of a large corporation. He had ability and persistence and, further than that, an agreeable way of dealing with people.

At several stages in his career openings occurred for promotion, promotion that might have gone to any one of several young engineers of about the same skill and experience. Invariably he was the one selected. We all know how people talk and gossip about such matters; yet no one, not even those left behind, were critical of him. No one said he had "pull," for all knew he never catered to the boss. He just took on any responsibility offered and saw it through without troubling his superiors.

Often he disagreed with his associates, but differences were adjusted so that every job was completed in harmony and without hard feelings. Finally, out of a situation in which a large group of men cooperated, he was chosen to head a great public-service organization, a position in which skill in human relations was a primary requirement.

Here was a man who liked dogs and other animals. He liked people. He enjoyed games and conversation with other people. He was not one of the "personality boys." He was quiet and studious. He was never in a hurry to talk first. He was a considerate listener. He never told incidents designed to reflect credit on himself. He gave credit to others, but only if credit was due. He was no flatterer. Out of all these unspectacular human qualities, added to technical knowledge, experience, and dependability, came extraordinary success.

Do you ever think much about the new fellow who comes to work in your department? Do you realize that he very likely has butterflies in his stomach? That he's terribly nervous and, therefore, more than ordinarily likely to be awkward and make mistakes?

A recent survey of a class of engineering graduates from a well-known university was made to determine what they wanted most in their first job. Overwhelmingly, they said they wanted sympathetic help and interest in getting away to a good start. They wanted this help from fellow workers as well as from the boss.

A successful businessman once told us about his first job.

"My family had always lived in the country. They were poor, but they had given me a sound education. Perhaps I should have felt quite confident when I took the job with the insurance company in the city, but I didn't. I had a ghastly feeling of loneliness and of being unequal to the city and the job.

"The streets seemed cold and hard in the early morning when I went downtown to work. No one looked at me. Everyone seemed bent on his own affairs. When I came into the big office where I had the job, nobody spoke to me. The assistant manager came right by my desk. He waved at the chief clerk, smiled at his secretary, and made a good-natured remark at which she laughed. But he never looked at me. He sure looked like the world was his as he stood up there, dressed with quiet elegance, a flower in his lapel. I can see him now, godlike, as he stood at one of the inside counters turning the leaves in the big insurance block books, rapidly okaying policy after policy.

"The general manager I seldom saw. He sat secluded in his richly paneled office—remote as the Grand Llama.

"Of course, I didn't expect the high bosses to pay much attention. But the fellow workers, I had hoped, would act like little fellows like me, be friendly, and all that.

"Not so. They didn't care a hoot. A casual, 'hello,' maybe.

That was all. No interest in me. No volunteering of help, no explanation of any of the many things so strange and formidable. One slick city kid who worked there, on the other hand, made a crack about my coat being too short, like a monkey jacket.

"All the other junior clerks seemed incredibly smart and sharp, and so very sure of themselves. Mention the number of a policy, say, Fidelity FWM-192,59947, and they could pick it right out of the file or, if it was in one of the block books, they remembered exactly where it was and could rout it out in a jiffy.

"Well, later I found that wasn't so much-a-much. In three months I could do it. Any average boy could have. These slick smart alecks needn't have been so high-hat.

"I stayed in that office six months. It was a grim experience that has lived with me to this day. What it taught me was the obligation on the part of the old hands to get the newcomer started off right."

In a firm where we worked there was an elderly man, "Uncle Joe," who had a desk at the end of the big room. He lived to himself and never spoke unless spoken to. Nobody paid any attention to him. He had arthritis or something wrong with his hands. The rumor was that he never did any work—just chucked the files in the bottom drawer of his desk and waited until the time was passed for doing what was needed. By chance, one day, we were thrown into conversation with this elderly gentleman. We found he was really quite a character and appreciated the attention of a younger person. We found, too, that the rumor about him was false, that he was an accurate, conscientious workman who knew the company, its policies, the officers, and their peculiarities very well. He helped us with many suggestions.

The day finally came when we were in wrong with the boss—something about a paper going out without a proper endorse-

ment. The boss sharply reprimanded us and walked away. No chance for explanation.

But, good, old Uncle Joe, who understood the circumstances and knew we were not at fault, hobbled in and told the boss. The boss came out and apologized.

Eventually, as has been said so many times in this book, people pay you back. Uncle Joe paid us back in a big way for just a little human recognition.

Reluctance to accept suggestions from an associate is a common trait. We all suffer from it more or less, because of the natural hesitancy to admit a failure. We remember a business associate who felt quite acutely that acceptance of any suggestion would be a confession of weakness. He would say, "We tried that twelve years ago and it didn't work." "I've worked out a plan on that myself." "You don't seem to understand." And so on. This man thought he was building strength by repelling suggestions. However, he only built a reputation among his associates for being bigoted and in a rut.

On the other hand, another would say, "Maybe there's something in it," ask questions, uncover weakness to the suggestion, or often adopt the suggestion. Then he would give credit where credit was due. It may be said, paraphrasing Franklin, "This man early found that when he gave credit to others, others gave credit to him."

Sometimes the process of taking associates into our circle of thoughts, plans, and activities requires much effort. Wise people find it pays to make that effort. Here's an example from the top business level:

The president of a large corporation was having trouble with one of his directors who owned a large block of stock. This director doubted the advisability of continuing the manufacture of one of the company's products. He wrote the president about it repeatedly. The president always replied, but the matter never was closed out. The director stayed in his office

and the president in his. The director began to pick at a lot of other phases of the business.

Finally, the president got together all the facts and analyses affecting the main point in the director's mind; namely, whether or not the manufacture of the item in question actually paid the company. The president took the train to the city where the director lived and spent a day going over the matter fully with him. With certain minor changes in procedure, it was agreed that the company should continue to make and merchandise the product. This story, which has its parallel in the experience of nearly every businessman, shows how necessary it is to recognize our associates, to recognize their viewpoints, and to show clearly we realize their personal importance.

All of us who work in shops or offices find some people who are difficult to get along with. People who don't do their part, people who complain to the boss about us, people who are so sensitive they take a casual remark as an insult, people who take credit for what we have accomplished.

Let's see what has actually worked out best in such situations. Isn't it true that people who are always engaged in disputes and quarrels seldom get ahead? The boss isn't so dumb as we're inclined to think—eventually he'll find out what's what, who is doing right, and who is causing the trouble.

The impulsive thing, when one is unfairly treated, is to let the other fellow have it right in the teeth. Lay him out cold. We know it would be an exquisite pleasure, for the moment, but what would it gain us in the long run? Usually a dispute of any kind leads to an involved situation where it becomes unclear who is at fault.

The best policy is to keep away from troublemakers. Slip by, go ahead and do the work, and the results will speak for themselves. In another chapter it was told how a successful man had long made it a practice, when he found someone was against him, of finding an opportunity of doing that person a favor.

That's a good practice, if one is saintlike enough to manage it.

To be sure, there are impossible situations where one's associates may make life with them intolerable, in spite of all one's efforts. Such a situation may cause a person serious nervous disorders or make him physically ill. Several broadminded human-type executives were asked about that. They all advise that the person so situated get a transfer to another department and start anew. They say he should be very sure he does his part and a little bit more in every cooperative effort, just to make sure his fellows will realize that he is fair and square.

People are people—in business life, in family life, in social life—and their reactions to little affronts, their arguments about matters of no personal concern to them whatever, go on and on to cause endless unnecessary frictions. Take this case:

In a lull of business in a department store, a woman employee and a man started talking about the movies. Clark Gable popped up in the conversation. "He's really handsome," the woman remarked. "With those jug ears," the man snorted. "Ridiculous! What do you say, Joe?" he asked another man who joined them. "Gable is the ugliest man in Hollywood," Joe replied.

Here, in the first place, was an entirely unnecessary dispute, wasn't it? But, however trivial the issue, it caused bitter resentment in the heart of the woman who first was flatly contradicted and then "put in the wrong" by having two people join in flouting her opinion. We would never have thought of cluttering up these pages with such a small item if it were not true that three years after this incident the aggrieved person remembered it and spoke to us about it.

Business or shop associates are just people. They will respond to the first rule of good human relations: Think, speak, and act in terms of other people's interests.

Finally, let's not forget:

1. Bad human relations are responsible for more than 80 per cent of the cases of dismissal from jobs.

2. Fellow employees, their opinions of you, may make or break you.
3. Don't adopt a bossy attitude. If you aspire to be a supervisor, your first qualification must be ability to get along with people, because a supervisor gets results only through other people.
4. Help the new employee with a friendly attitude.
5. Recognize the importance of old-timers; they can help you.
6. If you just can't get along in any given spot, get transferred to another department.
7. Always do your part, and a little bit more.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Why the Boss Is That Way

The Great One sits there coolly behind his desk, and you or I sit there nervously in front of the desk. It is an interview to determine whether or not we will get the job.

What thoughts are in the Great One's mind? What is he getting at with the questions he asks? What is his central purpose? What will determine his decision?

Well, in the first place, he usually doesn't feel like the Great One at all. He is a man who has agreed with his bosses that he will get certain things done. He feels constant pressure on him to get these things done. This pressure of responsibility is the main consideration with him when he is hiring a new employee or promoting one already in the organization.

So the central question in his mind is: How much can this applicant, this lad or girl, help me get my job done? To what extent can this applicant take over part of my job, carry part of my load?

When he asks us about our previous experience, he is considering how much he will be burdened with training us. Will we be quick to learn? Are we adaptable? Will we take suggestions for improvement?

When he asks about the jobs we have held before, and how long each, he is wondering if we get along with people, or whether we're complainers or troublemakers. He is watching

for any clue that may indicate whether our attitude will be helpful or not; whether we will contribute teamwork within the organization and friendly consideration for the customers.

For our part we are likely to be thinking: How hard is this job going to be? What hours? What pay? Is this boss going to be tough? How soon can I get one of those easy supervisor's jobs where I sit behind a desk and tell other people what to do?

Some of us who haven't been in business long may think the supervisor can create a job for us and put us to work if he just has the notion. Very seldom is that true. If there is a vacancy to be filled, the decision as to whether we get the job or not rests with us, depends on the qualities we have. It depends on the supervisor finding out from us (1) if we can do the work, (2) if we are willing workers, and (3) if we will work in friendly fashion with fellow workers.

These are the considerations in the supervisor's mind when we are seeking employment. But what about the boss after we are on the job?

The person employed in business may well consider this question: When a fellow worker helps you with one of the toughest parts of your daily job, how do you feel toward that person?

As a normal human being, you appreciate the help, you want to do something helpful to repay him. Isn't that true?

Believe it or not, the boss, the fellow worker who supervises your work, is a human being, too. He will respond to the basic formula for good human relations. Think, act, and speak in terms of his interests. In addition, we offer this specific rule. *Help him with a tough part of his job.*

Let's think about the boss and what his main interests are. Few people think about him coolly. They just feel him pushing and prodding them all the time, and mostly they resent that. They are unhappy. The boss is unhappy in having to do it, too;

but such people don't know it. They don't ever really think about the boss. Let's think about him.

With the cooperation of many groups of supervisors we have made an impartial study of bosses. Maybe their viewpoints will help us figure out what bosses are like, what they think, and what they want; and how we may get along with them.

First, the boss is a human being. All the basic elements of human nature are in him. He is the center of his own universe, with a concentrated interest in his own problems, his particular responsibilities, his own family, his hobbies, and so on. His human desires are the same as yours and mine. Survival is his first law, so he's out first to assure himself and his family of food, shelter, and security. In addition, he desires recognition from other people, appreciation of his good qualities—all the things we have been talking about.

Bosses are a class apart from rank-and-file employees only in two main qualities: they are generally more self-starting and usually have a greater sense of responsibility than the average worker. They are alike in those two main qualities; otherwise they vary from boss to boss, just as the rest of us differ from one another. The qualities they want from the people who work under them are the same two basic qualities their bosses demand from them: first, the qualities of being responsible and dependable; and, second, the quality of being a self-starter, of doing things to help get the job done without being told. The bosses are held responsible for getting certain things done, and what they want from us is good practical help in getting those things done. They must have this help, because they know if they don't get results their bosses will replace them with people who can and will get results.

If you want to get along well with the boss, think of his problems, try to understand what he is trying to get done, then help him do it. That's the first rule, and it is the invariable rule.

"People in business fall into three distinct classes," a thought-

ful business executive told us. "First, there are the kind of people who have to be told in detail everything they should do. With these, the supervisor has to follow through on every point to see that they do it. Such people are in the lowest marginal class. They are a burden, a constant problem to the supervisor. They are the first persons dismissed when it becomes necessary to cut down the force.

"Second, there are the people who, when told in detail just what to do and how to do it, will do just that and no more. They are indifferent. They wait to be told what to do next.

"The third class are the individuals who will do all that is allotted to them without prodding or follow-up and who, on top of that, will take an extra interest in getting other needed parts of the job done. These are the rather rare people who can supervise themselves, and beyond that indicate a capacity for supervising others. All supervisors come out of this class. Eventually all such people get promoted unless they have some fundamental failing, such as lack of desire, mental capacity, honesty, or the ability to get along with other people."

No one is more cherished by a supervisor in business than an assistant who will help carry his burden and relieve part of his worries. We had the opportunity to observe an assistant who did just that and thereby won substantial personal rewards for himself.

This man, whom we will call O'Brien, over a period of more than twenty years followed along as assistant to the supervisor as the supervisor won his way up into top management and finally became head of a great company. Why did the boss carry O'Brien along with him so that O'Brien himself became an important officer in the business? What did O'Brien have that the executive so greatly cherished?

O'Brien did not progress because of unusual technical skill, education, brains, or even what most people might call personality. He did have, however, great persistence and especially a

faculty for getting people to work with him. Beyond that, he tried unceasingly to help carry his boss's load and relieve him of worry.

In anything that O'Brien might reasonably expect to be of help, his boss would call him in.

"We are having some difficulty in the Oxford plant," he would say to O'Brien, telling him what he knew of the situation. "Do you think you might help untangle it?"

"Leave it to me," was O'Brien's characteristic reply. "I'll get right into it and give you a report on Thursday of next week."

How that "leave-it-to-me" phrase pleased O'Brien's boss! Usually O'Brien in taking on any such job had very few ideas as to how the problem could be solved. He didn't always find the solution. However, his boss came to know by long experience that he, the boss, could forget the matter, temporarily at least, being sure O'Brien would solve the problem or let him know.

O'Brien was a bird dog on jobs of this kind. He would go into the situation and flush out the hidden trouble. Most important of all, he had a great way of getting people to help him get the job done. Everyone knew he gave credit to the people who helped him. He encouraged the boss to thank them for cooperating with O'Brien.

The boss never had to check up on O'Brien. When O'Brien said, "Leave it to me," he meant it. If O'Brien said he would report on the situation Thursday, he made his report Thursday. O'Brien knew if he waited until Friday the boss might begin to wonder and worry, and this smart O'Brien knew that the main thing was to save the boss's nervous energy. A good many people didn't think O'Brien had so much on the ball, but he had plenty to get along very well in business. He always thought hard about what his boss was trying to accomplish. He had the boss's viewpoint, and he helped the boss get his job done—and his boss helped O'Brien in return.

Another type of assistant cherished by the supervisor is the man who always gives accurate information. Let's bear in mind that the supervisor is likely to act on the information we give him. If the information is incorrect, the action he takes may cause serious personal trouble with his bosses or other people. Then he's pretty sure to blame the person who misinformed him, and that's going to hurt the standing of the person who gave the wrong information. Being sure of the accuracy of information that we give is a human-relations matter of importance.

Most of us, in casual conversation, fall into the careless habit of passing on information without taking precautions to find out if it's really correct. It's a safe rule never to give our supervisors uncertain or doubtful information. Furthermore, if a person feels that his supervisor should know about some rumor or have certain information that can't be readily checked, he should present it frankly as rumor or an unchecked report.

Business is largely done on faith—scraps of paper such as checks and warehouse receipts. Transactions running into vast sums of money are handled by word of mouth. Faith of one person in another is the basis of human relationships, in business and all phases of life. People want to know that they can depend on you.

Bosses vary a lot. How you deal with them varies accordingly. For example, one man may be austere, may resent familiarity, while another may like to have you call him by his first name. But it may be well to bear in mind that nothing will tend to make a friendly supervisor close up more than the person that seeks to impose on his good nature. If a person demands a raise every time his work is praised, the boss will naturally be inclined to cease praising good work. If the boss grants a person time off to visit a very sick relative and thereafter that person's relatives seem to get sick often, he may very likely refuse to make any concessions of that kind whatever.

Personal habits of bosses differ, too. We remember one boss who was always irritable in the early morning when he was engaged in clearing up the first problems of the day. You'd get snapped at if you disturbed him, even asked a question, before eleven o'clock. But after that, he was relaxed, affable, really interested in helping us with whatever might be on our minds. It's just horse sense in human relations to note such habits and adapt ourselves to them.

Most supervisors like personal recognition, as do most other human beings. They appreciate hearing favorable comments about themselves and their work. But if it comes from someone on their staffs, they want to be mighty sure it is sincere. The boss is likely to agree with the old saying that flattery is like cologne water, to be smelled and not to be swallowed.

Sometimes the most reasonable boss is unreasonable, from our viewpoint. In such cases let's bear in mind that there are many phases of the business he knows and must consider, and that he cannot always take the time to explain all the complications and ramifications of the problem he gives us.

No matter how it may appear to others, the chief problem of the supervisor is to conserve his time and nervous energy. One way in which he very much dislikes to spend his time and nervous energy is in having to smooth down the ruffled feelings of those who work under his direction.

"Most people who complain about fellow employees to their supervisors do so without thinking through what the supervisor might be able to do that would help the situation," an office manager told us. "What can the supervisor do? Summarily dismiss the person against whom the complaint is made? Seldom is that possible or advisable. Call the alleged offender in and give him a dressing down? Well, that would just make an open breach and make the one complained about hate the complainer and seek to get even. Most complainers, so far as I can see, just complain to relieve their feelings and perhaps hope to get a bit

of sympathy. I put them down as weak characters who feel they need to have a lot of attention and don't know how otherwise to get it.

"From the standpoint of their own interests these people ought to think their problems through and realize how their complaints work against them. The hard-boiled boss is likely to call the other party in and knock together the heads of both parties to the quarrel, making it clear they'll both suffer if they don't get along together. The diplomatic boss may spend an hour trying to calm down the complainer. The weak supervisor will try to evade the issue. In any case, however, the boss likely has had his day spoiled, his mind diverted from important tasks, and, you may be sure, he resents the extra burden thus placed on him. Let's be clear: His resentment goes directly against the complainer.

"The supervisor expects his people to get along with each other; that's part of the job; and he will not long tolerate the complainer.

"Other complaining employees usually complain about the management, as well as fellow employees. Sometimes, of course, the complaints are justified; but in many cases the complaints are just the results of the individual's highly critical attitude about everything. The same theory applies even more strongly to complaints about customers. We have to get along with the customers. That's where our business comes from. Our jobs depend on them.

"My advice," this long-experienced office manager continued, "is that if a person doesn't like his associates and his firm, or for any reason can't get into agreement with them, he ought, for his own happiness and peace of mind, to leave the department or the firm's service and get a job somewhere else.

"People in business and industry spend about as many hours on the job as they do at home. They ought to be happy on the job. They should have the satisfaction that comes with the

attitude of identifying themselves with the outfits for which they work."

From the standpoint of the employee who habitually feels abused, however, quitting the job will seldom improve his situation personally. People working in all lines face much the same problems: how to get along with fellow workers and adjust themselves to the policies and circumstances under which they work. *Conditions are never ideal in this world of human fallibility. We have to get along with people as long as we live. That is a regular part of the job itself and of life.*

In line with the general consideration of saving the supervisor's time and energy, we may well avoid putting up a lot of problems for him to solve. Let's think out the solution to each problem we present. In doing that we should consider all the angles involved, using good common sense. In any event, the boss doesn't want problems; he wants practical solutions to problems. He can't remedy a situation by waving a magic wand. So it's a good rule: *Don't heap problems on the boss. Think out and suggest a specific remedy to each problem you present to him.*

Let's always bear in mind the important fact that the boss is employed to get results. He is interested in getting results and not at all interested in alibis. He is not interested in excuses, no matter how good they may be. He is not interested in excuses because he can't use them with his boss.

"I want people around me who can get things done," we once heard the top executive of a big, complicated company exclaim. "I want people who can get things done, not people who can demonstrate, however positively, why things can't be done. You can be sure I know the difficulties; but what we have to have is good results in spite of difficulties."

This executive greatly prided himself on his detailed follow-through on all his company's activities. Like most executives, he had no use for excuses. Like most other employees, his chief

assistants were inclined to alibi when he raised questions as to the way they handled, or failed to handle, various phases of the business.

It was common comment that most of the assistants who were called to his office came out with flushed faces. But some learned by experience. Some found out that this executive, like all effective managers, was interested only in results, and that there was no personal affront implied in his constant checking up. They found, as have many other observant persons in business, that to acknowledge a mistake was really a source of strength. They found that admission of error showed confidence that their general work was done with such efficiency they could acknowledge an occasional mistake. Quick acknowledgment of the point being made by the boss, clears his mind and gives him confidence in his associate.

No good executive wants yessing, of course. He always respects the person who shows him where he is wrong, when he is wrong. He will admire the person who does this diplomatically, not so much because of his own personal vanity, as because it shows the ability of the assistant to deal effectively with people, to get along with customers and fellow workers.

But the executive wants his associates to get his viewpoint as the responsible head of the firm or the department, and to go along with him and his methods in getting the job done.

There is no need to feel at a loss because we haven't a glib tongue in making explanations and excuses to the boss. The talent for alibiing defeats its own purpose. The slick excuse-maker may slide by an interview or two, but the boss always seems to have a memory like an elephant, and eventually he will become disgusted with the employee who fails to give him results instead of reasons why the job couldn't be done.

Finally, in keeping with the main purpose of the book, let those of us who are in public-contact work remember this: The boss knows that the life of the business, his and our jobs and

future opportunity, depend on satisfied customers. If our customers are pleased and satisfied, our relations with the boss are pretty sure to be good.

To understand the boss, let's remember:

1. The boss has accepted responsibility for getting certain results. If he does not get the results, he will lose his job.
2. Therefore, the main thing that the boss wants is help in getting his job done.
3. In hiring a new employee for a vacancy he wants to know (*a*) if the applicant can do the work, (*b*) if he will be a willing worker, and (*c*) if he will get along well with fellow employees and customers.
4. Bosses like self-starters who require practically no supervision.
5. Don't make it a habit of complaining to the boss about fellow employees.
6. Don't heap problems on the boss. Tell him your well-thought-out idea for solving a given problem.
7. The reason the boss can't accept alibis and excuses is that his boss won't accept them. People have to get results all up and down the line in business.
8. Avoid being a yes man, but try to get the boss's viewpoint and use his method.
9. Help the boss save his time and nervous energy. That's his greatest problem.
10. Please the customers, and you'll please the boss.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Supervisor Gets Results through Leadership

The big fellow rolled his car into the station lot, eased himself out, and walked over to the pump block where Ben was serving a customer. Ben grinned at the big fellow and said,

"Hiyu, Mr. Crowson. Be with you in a minute."

Ben thanked the customer, calling him by name, then wiped his hands and came over and shook hands with his district superintendent. Crowson was smiling.

"Nice work, Ben," he said. "Maybe I've got some good news for you. How'd you like the station manager job over at Fourth and Mayfair? Think you can handle it?"

Ben's face glowed. "I sure can," he said. "When do I start?"

"I think you can handle it, too," Crowson said. "You're assistant manager here. You know every job in the station, including keeping the records. You've got a lot of drive and you're honest and dependable. The best thing you've got, so far as the promotion is concerned, is that you take responsibility."

"Thank you, Mr. Crowson. I try hard, all right. When do I start?"

"Monday, if that's all right with you. Now, look, Ben," he continued, "this is going to be a different sort of a deal for you.

Manager, not assistant. It means you're going to really take over a big station. Fourteen men work there. It's a bigger operation than this. And I won't be able to help you much in getting started, not as I normally would. I'll have to be away—boss's orders. You just take hold and do the best you can. But let me ask you one question: What, in your opinion, is the most important thing for a boss to do?"

Ben didn't hesitate long. "Set a good example," he replied.

"Good boy!" was Crowson's comment. "There are a lot of other things, as you'll find out; but none is more important than that. From the president of the outfit down, every supervisor of other people has to set a good example."

"I'll do my best," Ben promised. "You can depend on it."

"O.K., Ben," said Crowson in parting. "I'll be seeing you later that week. Good luck, my boy."

On his way home late that afternoon Ben's mind was seething with thoughts about the new job.

"Better not forget what the old man and I agree is most important," he said to himself. He took out a notebook he carried in his pocket and wrote:

"Set a good example."

Crowson dropped in at Fourth and Mayfair a few days after Ben took over. Ben was working like a beaver. He was servicing a car, explaining as he went along to a new man he was breaking in on the job, and occasionally asking the customer a question. Pleasant, efficient, and lots of go.

Crowson looked around the sales office, examined the reports file, looked in the washroom, walked out to the lub unit.

"How is it?" he asked when Ben joined him.

Ben's smile was a little wry.

"Not very smooth," he said.

"So I noticed," said Crowson. "Two of the men smoking on the lot when I came in. Windows are not very clean, neither

is the washroom, nor the area. You know, Ben, cleanliness is an absolute must. Yesterday's sales report isn't in yet. How about the money—did you bank it?"

"Honest, I didn't have time. I never worked so hard, Mr. Crowson. I've tried to set a good example, like you said. In fact, I wrote it down here in my notebook after our talk last week. But I seem to be way behind already in about everything that has to be done around here."

"It's tough getting started. May I give you a suggestion, Ben? Perhaps you've started here with a little too much emphasis on this setting-an-example thing. That's very important. But even if you know you can do every job quicker and better than anyone else, you can't do all the work yourself. How are the men doing?"

"I wouldn't want to mention any names," Ben said, "and I don't mean to be critical—not so soon anyway. But some of the men don't seem to be doing their stuff."

"Well," Crowson remarked, "you're the manager of this particular operation of the company. Let's use the word supervisor, not only because it's the common term, but because I think you ought to realize that the big part of your job is supervising the work of the others here. Somebody has always got to think, plan, assign the work, and follow through to see that it gets done—to see that the most important things are done first. He has to keep a hand on every phase of the business. He has to handle the extra things, the emergencies that come up in the day's work. In these station managers' jobs, such as yours, the manager must help with the work, too, so far as he reasonably can. But the main responsibility is for supervising the work of others.

"A lot of men are like children," he continued. "They'll try you out at first and see how far they can go. Some of them may have done that here. You can't let them fall into bad habits, for

their sakes as well as yours and the company's. Be the manager. The supervisor gets results through other people. Better put that one down, too, in your notebook."

Ben wrote it down, as Crowson drove away:

A supervisor gets results through other people.

Then Ben made a personal tour of inspection. Things were certainly at loose ends. Mr. Crowson might well have blown his top. Tired and harried, Ben felt burned up, as the second shift came on and they worked through the noontime rush.

In the lull in the afternoon, Ben called the men together. He told them in so many words he was "boss around here." Williams, he pointed out, had done a sloppy job of servicing that old lady's car, neglected even wiping the windshield, and was gruff when she asked a question. Ben bawled him out for being discourteous. Johnson violated the rule against smoking on the property. Burns wasted time, and when he came back from lunch had obviously had a couple of drinks. Ben called out others by name, including Burke who had failed to put oil in the crankcase on that Murray check-up job Monday, a dangerous, unforgivable error. And finally Ben wound up, speaking sarcastically to the assistant manager,

"And you, Bill, you haven't been any too helpful."

Then Ben put on his coat and went home. He felt better. He had a feeling of having dealt vigorously with a bad situation.

But next morning when he came to the station nobody spoke to him. The men took their assignments without an unnecessary word. Although Ben was all over the place giving orders, checking up on everybody and generally bossing, the work seemed to go worse than ever. A bad day.

That evening Ben phoned Crowson and went over to Crowson's home to see him.

"Holy cats, what a mess!" said Ben, telling the superintendent what had transpired. "And, honestly, I'm trying hard."

"I know, I know," said Crowson. "I've been through it all. So has every other supervisor or officer. I told you in the beginning this job of supervising was going to be something different. I guess you're finding out that's quite an understatement. Don't be discouraged. We have a lot of confidence in you, Ben, and you're going to succeed.

"But it looks as if you're inclined to go to extremes. First, you tried to let the business and the men run themselves. Then you clamped down pretty roughly. These men here aren't machines. They aren't so many units of manpower to do so many units of work per day. They are human beings. They should be dealt with in a calm, firm, friendly way. You have to supervise, guide, train, and help them.

"And they're all different. Take Burns, for example. He's one of the men you said was just goofing off, wasting time, taking a couple of drinks at noontime. I know him like I know all the rest. He's having some trouble at home. His youngster has had polio, still in bad shape. His wife has worried till she's really sick too. Burns is not too strong a character. So he just takes a couple of snorts, to forget it.

"Get hold of Burns some time and talk with him. Don't pry into his private life too far, but get him to talk, if you can. Help him and set him straight. And be sure you put over the point that drinking because you have trouble is the beginning of the end for anyone. Go easy, Ben, but make the point clear. You might say we never fire anyone here. The men dismissed are those whose own actions make it impossible for us to keep them on the job. We have a big investment in each man. I mean that literally. It is costly in time and money to train a man and get him used to our business. We take a big loss every time we have to let a man go."

The superintendent went over the situation and the characteristics of the men on Ben's crew. Finally he came to Bill, the assistant manager.

"A cold fish," Ben interrupted. "As assistant he ought to help me, work closely with me, keep things going."

"Think hard about Bill," the superintendent advised. "I happen to know that he thought he should have been made station manager here. He's a good man. It was a close decision between him and you. If he keeps heads up, he'll get the next promotion to station manager in his district. In the meantime, think how you'd feel if you were in his place: a fellow, brought in from another station to be his boss, ignores him at first, and then bawls him out sarcastically in the presence of the men. If you were Bill, wouldn't you be burned?"

"Bill knows more about this particular station than you do. He knows the customers, especially, and they're the most important thing in the business. I suggest that you ask his advice and act on it every time you can conscientiously. Lean on him. Let him know you consider him important. This applies to your dealing with every man in the organization. Be interested in them and they'll be interested in you. Help them and they'll help you.

"Finally, Ben, a good supervisor never reprimands a worker in the presence of other people. Bawling a man out before others disturbs the whole force, sometimes for days. It is the wrong thing to do, even if you're intent on firing the man. And it is absolutely contrary to what you want to accomplish if you just want to correct him and make him a better man.

"When you find something to criticize in a man's work or attitude, always take him aside. Do it in private. Take him back there to the lub unit. First, ask him questions. You will find in lots of cases that the situation was not what you thought. Let the man talk first. Find out the facts.

"Then before you criticize find something good to say; something that's true so the man will know you're sincere. Let him know you have confidence in him. Having done all that, you

may talk right straight to him and mince no words. Chances are he'll take it to heart and do his best to improve.

"And if you, yourself, are in error, don't hesitate to admit it at once. That's a sign of strength and self-confidence.

"This is your own little mess, Ben. I'm not going to interfere. You work it out.

"You know, of course, I have a friendly interest in you. In addition, I have a personal stake in seeing you succeed because you were my choice for this job and my bosses know it. But, Ben, what I feel toward you is of small importance. I'll help, but I can't do the job for you. I can't make you or break you. Your fate rests with how well you deal with these men, how well you get them to work together and to work with you. I can only help you with little talks like this. You have to work out your own personal destiny in terms of these human beings who make up your crew."

"I understand, Mr. Crowson. It's up to me, and the performance of the men working with me. That's where I go ahead or fail. Thanks for making this all so plain. I feel plenty humble. But I think I can work this out along the lines you suggest. I've made some notes in my personal check-up book. See if they are all right:

"Treat each man as an individual. Let him know he is important."

"Suggest or request rather than command."

"Ask questions before reprimanding. Criticize in private."

"What else?"

"Be a leader rather than a boss."

Ben wrote that down, too. At the first opportunity next morning, he got his crew into a huddle.

"I'm sorry I went off half-cocked yesterday," he said. "I let things get snafu here, and then I blamed you. I feel bad because I mentioned several of you by name. Especially I want to say

that Bill here knows this deal better than I, and I hope he and you will take hold and help me. I'm going to get things set up so I'll be able to work and talk with every one of you. I want your suggestions as to how we can make this little outfit better. I mean it. I've been too quick on the trigger, but you'll find I'm going to be fair and that I'll help every man who helps get the job done."

One or two of the men grumbled and certainly there was no hand clapping from anyone when Ben finished talking. But the day's work was the best since Ben had been there. Later that day Ben talked with Bill. He asked him for any suggestions he might have.

"Joe Timmons has been on the late shift more than his quota. It might be a good idea to relieve him."

Ben acted on Bill's suggestion at once. It wasn't easy to rig up a rearrangement of shifts. He had to talk with several of the men. He asked Bill to help him, and together they worked it out.

As the days went by the situation and the sales improved. Ben found himself with a pretty good organization. Bill, the assistant manager, was promoted to a station managership by Crowson, and Bill and Ben parted very good friends. Crowson complimented Ben on his patience, good common sense and the general improvement.

One day Crowson dropped in and said, "Ben, remember you were talking with me the other day on the phone about that customer, Hobart, who quit us, and that you'd got him back? Good for more than a thousand gallons of gas a year, plus oil, servicing, and extras?

"Well, I saw Hobart the other day and he told me that it was your salesman, Lockwood, who came over to see him and who persuaded him to come back to us."

"That's right, Mr. Crowson. But, of course, when I said I brought him back, I meant *we*."

"Well, I understand Lockwood overheard you phoning me that you'd done it. 'We' would have been better. But, Ben, why not come right out and say that Lockwood did it? You know, I don't care whether you personally do the good things or not; neither does the management. You are manager here to get results. We are just interested in getting the job done in the most economical and efficient way. Remember, a supervisor gets results through other people? If you agree with what I've said about the Lockwood matter, haven't you something to put down in your notebook?"

"Yes, sir. How about—

"Give credit where credit is due."

"Fine," said Crowson. "Isn't there something you might *do* now on this item?"

Ben called Lockwood over.

"Mr. Crowson and I were just talking about your good work in getting back the Hobart business. I want you to know, Mr. Crowson, that Locky did it on his own time. He went over to see Hobart after work."

"Nice going, Lockwood," said Crowson and shook hands with him.

"Before I go, Ben, I want to tell you something that happened at a station in another district just recently. I know you'd never do such a thing, but I think you may find in it another note to complete your notes on supervision. Well, believe it or not, here's what happened:

"One of the men came to the station manager with a suggestion. Something about a new type of motor, or something he thought the company could do about air compressors. And here's what the station manager said to the man: 'You just forget it, Joe. We've got a lot of high-priced men in the home office that are hired to do the thinking. They don't need any suggestions from you. Just pipe down, and be sure you do your work right.' What do you think of that?"

Ben laughed, "Bad as some of my mistakes."

"Worse than most. Our outfit encourages suggestions. We've built leadership in the industry by constant improvement of methods and devices. You kill a man's initiative if you don't give due consideration to his suggestions."

Ben wrote down in his book:

Welcome suggestions for improvement.

One day Crowson's office phoned Ben, "Tell Meisel he's being transferred to Garden and Fifteenth station, effective tomorrow."

When Ben told Meisel, there was plenty of trouble. Meisel would have to walk seven blocks to get the bus to Garden and Fifteenth. Then a twenty-minute trip on the bus—every morning. His house, on which he'd taken a long-time lease, was in easy walking distance, only four blocks from where he now worked. It was a bad change for Meisel.

Crowson had been out of his office on special work. He hurried over and went into the situation with Ben and Meisel. He explained that Garden and Fifteenth had been working shorthanded for some time. Then one of their best men suddenly had had an operation for appendicitis. When it was all explained, the matter was amicably arranged. Meisel would help out temporarily at Garden and Fifteenth. Ben would have to get along temporarily one man short. The situation of each would be relieved as soon as possible.

"I'm sorry about this," Crowson said. "It was an emergency, but we could have given you a little more time and certainly we should have let you know the reasons why. This is going to make things inconvenient for you, Meisel, and more work for you, Ben. I shan't forget your good spirit about this."

Later Crowson said to Ben, "We learn from experience. What do you put down here?"

Ben hauled out his well-thumbed notebook once more and wrote:

Explain why. Let men know in advance about changes that affect them.

Crowson continued, "You've pretty well got on top of this job of supervision, Ben. I notice some very good things you're doing here, besides those we've discussed before. To complete your list, put these down:

"Let persons know how they stand. Suggest ways to improve.

"The best way to get a man to improve is to praise good performance, rather than criticize the bad.

"Keep all promises."

"It's nice of you to say that I do these things," Ben said. "I'm only sure that I try to. If I'm making progress it's because of your help."

"Don't polish the apple, Ben." Crowson smiled, and went on, "We've just finished a series of conferences at the head office on leadership. I hope we can talk about that subject a lot in the future. In the meantime, here is a summary I've made for you and the other station managers. Read it over."

Here is the summary Crowson gave Ben:

Leadership

Definition: "Leadership in industry is the ability to get others to work willingly."

1. The leader gets results through influence and example.
2. A supervisor's success depends largely on winning and holding his people through leadership.

A Leader Should Have

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Confident bearing | 8. Fairness and honesty |
| 2. Poise | 9. Liking for people |
| 3. Sense of humor | 10. Tact in dealing with others |
| 4. Pleasing voice | 11. Self-control |
| 5. Patience and understanding | 12. Sincere interest in people |
| 6. Ability to express himself | 13. Dependability |
| 7. Decisiveness | 14. Imagination |

15. Ability to organize, deputize, and supervise 16. Friendliness
17. Proper job "know-how"

"There are two things that made me sure from the start that you'd succeed, Ben. One of them was that you were glad to accept responsibility.

"The other was your own first precept for a supervisor: 'Set a good example.' You've always done that. Especially, I've seen you set a masterful example in courtesy and consideration for the customers. You followed all the procedure laid down in the book, and you did a lot of other little things besides. You'd say something pleasant about the youngster if there was one in the car. Or maybe even notice the customer's dog. People appreciate these little things so much that, without realizing anything more than that they feel happy and satisfied in dealing with you, they will drive a dozen blocks to come to your station. The point is that the men are going to follow your example. You can urge, plead, or command the men here to be courteous, but if you don't smile and give extra service, neither will they. So with other phases of the work."

So here we leave Ben and his friendly superintendent. Ben we have seen, has the ability to learn from his mistakes, so we may be sure he will do rather well.

Whether or not you are a supervisor, human problems are much the same in all phases of life. Most anyone should benefit from a little thought on the subject. A doctor, for example, has to supervise nurses. In a way, he supervises his patients. A teacher of any kind is a supervisor. A rank-and-file worker has problems in supervision. Everyone has to get results from people. That's supervision.

You would like to have certain things done by your wife. She would like to have certain results from you. Both of you try to get results from your children. Such matters are closely allied to supervision, may in fact be called supervision. If you head a

committee of some sort, you undoubtedly are a supervisor. Supervision is a kind of selling.

For handy reference, let's summarize here the main points involved in supervising the work of other people:

1. Set a good example.
2. A supervisor gets results through other people.
- *3. Treat every man as an individual. Let him know he is important.
4. Suggest or request rather than command.
5. Ask questions before reprimanding. Criticize in private.
6. Be a leader rather than a boss.
7. Give credit where credit is due.
8. Welcome suggestions for improvement.
9. Explain why. Let men know in advance about changes that affect them.
10. Let every person know how he stands. Suggest ways to improve.
11. The best way to get a man to improve is to praise good performance rather than criticize the bad.
12. Keep all promises.

PART FOUR

Your Personality Is Showing!

CHAPTER 14 You Can Build a Winning Personality

CHAPTER 15 Come Out of Your Shell

CHAPTER 16 Relax, and Keep Your Balance and Health

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

You Can Build a Winning Personality

Have you ever noticed that plain or even ugly people often have the strongest and most appealing personalities? They wear well.

Handsome men and beautiful women gain attention and a feeling of importance with little or no effort. Many feel no necessity for bulwarking their personalities with sustained personal effort. When the veneer wears off, they find themselves unable to cope with homely people who have built character by effort.

We've all noticed that a movie actor or actress, who relies entirely on beauty of face or body to get by, may soon wear out; but others, who have to make an urgent call upon their talents, grow to be loved by all of us.

All through life we see men and women who have developed winning personalities in spite of homeliness or some other defect. Very often a person starts as an ugly duckling and turns out to be a beautiful swan. History is full of examples of handicaps turned into assets. "Beethoven, losing his hearing, fought his way to incomparable music." Lincoln was a homely man. Washington studied his defects and set a pattern to remedy them. Edison was considered dumb by his teachers. Charles

Darwin was called a no-good by his father. Demosthenes had an impediment in his speech. Steinmetz was physically handicapped. And so on.

Isn't it true that, while others cry about their ill fortune, *such men make their own luck?*

Character is the basis of enduring personality, but it is not the same thing. Personality is the reflection of the person, including his traits and character, that other people sense. Personality may be said to be "the impression we make on other people." So the old saying, "Your face is your fortune," has little in fact to justify it. It could be said more truly: Your personality is your fortune.

Certainly this needs to be qualified, but it is true that personality, the impression we make on other people, is the first great influence a man brings to bear in human relations. However, unless it is backed up by such character qualities as dependability, honesty, and persistence, eventually he will fail. The two go together. The best personality qualities are the traits of character that shine through and are shown in a person's attitudes and actions toward other people.

The "magnetic personality" that we've all heard so much about, the personality that attracts people, grows out of the character-building quality of positive effort. It comes from being a positive rather than a negative or passive character. It shows itself in positive action—in animation, in a tendency to be direct, alert, cheerful, and confident.

A magnetic person, it may be noted, is always interested in others. His main characteristic is that he "goes out to people." *The key to the magnetic personality is in the "going out to people."* We mean going out with cordiality, a smile, and a desire to be helpful.

"If it's that simple and that important," you say, "why do so few people 'go out to people'?"

We think it's their oversensitive ego. The person who hesitates to go out to people usually fears he will be rebuffed. He can't bear the thought of that. So if he does go out to people, it may be in a halfhearted way. And if, unfortunately, he doesn't meet with an instant response of the greatest cordiality, he may think he's rebuffed and humiliated, and draw back into his shell again. Such is the ridiculous state the oversensitive ego may put a person into. He is always being insulted, usually when not even the slightest rebuff is intended, because he is always fearful of being insulted.

Let's expect to be liked by other people and go out to them confidently.

It is being interested in others that makes the man with the magnetic personality interesting to other people. Such a person's interest is active and it is obvious. It is a "positive" quality about him. He is an optimist. He is willing to do battle with difficulties. He is the kind of man who refuses to admit a job is impossible. He is eager to cooperate with other people. His very spirit is activating; it is an inspiration to his friends and associates.

How did he get that way? He met and overcame difficulties, beginning perhaps with petty annoyances and working up gradually until he could smile—and win—no matter what hit him.

Personal drive comes from having a purpose in life—having a goal. Aimless people drift aimlessly. Life should be built around a central purpose. We should be going somewhere, and we should know where we are going. If a person sets his mind ardently on a goal, the action follows almost automatically.

Let's sit down, relax, and think a bit: Would we rather make the effort to be somebody worth-while, commanding the interest, respect, and esteem of others, commanding a position in life, with the benefits and privileges that go with it; or would we

selfishly gain more satisfaction and pleasure in the long run if we just drifted without any particular effort? Which in the end has the harder life—the tramp or the worth-while citizen? To put it another way, should one be a sluggish and unlovely carp, idling in the stagnant backwashes of life, or should he be a scintillating trout swimming up the rushing stream?

It should be said very plainly that if a person wants to be attractive to others he has to have something to offer—some depth, some color, and human understanding. One can acquire these things by reading worth-while books, by human experience, by associating with interesting people. This requires effort, first in observing and absorbing. Then, after having absorbed, one must “give out.” A person must share with others, have interest in others, must think, speak, and act in terms of other people. That’s the way to individual happiness.

For personality, someone said, accentuate the positive. Too many people are disorganized and rendered futile by diffused thoughts and negative attitudes. What is the cure for such doubts and fears?

Central purpose is the thing. Because of this purpose a person’s life becomes significant. He becomes an active, happy human being.

The desire to achieve pays off in all phases of life that may be important to us. If a person is a blacksmith, let him set his mind on excelling as a blacksmith. If he is a parent, let him give that most important job the best he has. Even in sports and hobbies there is little satisfaction or zest if a person does not try hard. Happiness comes from the satisfaction of performing one’s functions well. With the desire comes the purpose that starts the action that gives the satisfaction.

It is a law of life that one must be active and busy. Nature punishes the person who violates that law. Having nothing to do is intolerable. People in that situation create problems for themselves. Observe the troubles of people who have wealth

enough for complete leisure. Find a person who has nothing to do, who does nothing, and you are sure to find an unhappy person. The offices of psychiatrists are filled with people who, because of lack of anything to do, have thought up troubles that have made them sick or desperate. *The devil not only finds work for idle hands to do, he finds devilish thoughts for idle minds to think.*

We can learn easily to be active and positive. One of the best helps is to have something pleasant to look forward to. The expectant, forward-looking person, whose thoughts are on some event to come, is an attractive person. He will find that it helps to have in hand plans for some game, trip, event, or occasion he expects to be pleasant. There should be several of these in rotation so that, if one fails, another can be substituted.

Animation also can be developed as a trait. It can be shown in the voice by placing an inflection upon words that color the meaning. Monotone can be avoided by opening the mouth and speaking out clearly. However, if one is emphatic all the time, he will wear out himself and his associates. A well-modulated voice, just loud enough to be heard distinctly, is the most agreeable.

The voice affects the hearer—often importantly. Think of the political speakers whose voices cause us to vote for or against them. A good voice is worth cultivating. But an obviously “cultivated” voice suggests artificiality and insincerity, and so is a handicap.

A voice specialist often brings about a great improvement, or a good course in public speaking may help. But, since these may seem unnecessary or difficult in the average case, the following things that anyone can do without outside assistance are suggested:

Use the lower registers of the voice to develop a deeper speaking tone. Voices of most American men and women are too thin and nasal in quality.

Read aloud at home. Try to express the meaning of what you read in your voice. Read meaningfully. Ask your audience to suggest how you may improve.

Open your mouth. Articulate every syllable so that no word is slurred. For example, say "police," not "p'lice"; "going," not "goin' "; "government," not "guvment."

Watch the inflection. Don't permit the voice to fall at the end of sentences.

Change of pace in speaking lends interest. About 150 words per minute is a good average, but the pace should be varied, slowing down for emphasis and speeding up in covering details.

The use of short sentences helps carry thoughts clearly. The habit of joining several sentences together interminably with the word "and" kills the interest of the listener. He may resent it as a method that shuts him out of the conversation.

Animation can also be shown by facial expression—by revealing the emotions, especially the emotions of interest, tolerance, and good humor. A dead pan may be funny in a comedian, but an expressionless face is dreary and uninteresting in the workaday world.

Gestures, a few natural gestures, add to animation. Note how effective salesmen, public speakers, actors, and actresses use gestures. They are just as useful in everyday conversation. The action of gesturing helps gain and hold attention.

Action, as contrasted to inertness, attracts people. A simple example: When you drive along the road and see a herd of cattle, all of them standing in the shade except one that is moving about, your eye is automatically attracted to the one moving. Similarly, at a party, you're attracted to a person who moves about. The person who sits by the wall becomes a wall-flower. However, no one should carry the rule of being active to the extent of being a jitterbug. Relaxed control should govern one's activity.

Note that in all these phases of our behavior, important or small, *personality shows itself in action with people.*

There is no more helpful thing a person can do toward development of an agreeable personality than to join with other people in common activities. This again brings into play the principle of positive action, involving here the taking of the initiative in joining with others. The person wishing to have an attractive personality should "go out to people," not wait for them to come to him. It will pay anyone to make the effort. A person living like a recluse loses his natural ease with people, loses the common touch; his personality becomes warped. People find him difficult, hard to cooperate with. So he fails to get the human understanding and help that are necessary to success and happiness.

Modern psychologists have discovered that certain habits, formerly considered of incidental value, are exceedingly important. For example, Dr. Henry C. Link recently declared that "sports and games are supremely important in developing a sound mind and effective personality."

If the group wants to play ball or tennis and we don't know how, or are too timid or self-conscious to start to learn, we will be left out. Same with swimming, dancing, or playing in an orchestra, or bridge, or joining a sewing bee. The I-can't-do-it's and the I-donwanna's are the leftouts. Personality is shown only in action with other people, and it's well worth the effort to acquire the ordinary skills that make it possible to join with other people in the activities they commonly enjoy.

Any activities in which a number of persons join for a common purpose—club work, serving on community committees and the like, create in a person a sense of teamwork that is really necessary for the development of a good personality.

You may notice that effective public speakers avoid building themselves up, that popular actors in motion pictures and radio, such as Bob Hope, Jack Benny, and "Schnozzle" Durante, have

always made fun at their own personal expense. It's a good rule: Never be the hero of your own story.

And, if one wants to win admiration, he will be quick to admit his faults or acknowledge when he is in error. Also he will avoid arguments. Nobody wins an argument.

We don't mean that we should let people run over us. One's own sense of strength, self-respect, and individuality should be maintained. One should be fearless. Fearlessness is a personality trait of first importance. Occasionally there is even need for drastic action. Nobody respects a yes man. Nobody admires a servile, wishy-washy personality or one who practices false humility.

But, having said all that, let's recognize the plain fact that nearly all errors in human relations are on the other side. Seldom do we see a person being too considerate of other people. Very often, however, we do see a person who wants to take the other fellow down a peg or two. Very common is the man who will not try to accommodate his viewpoint to that of another. Nearly all persons who make such errors are overly jealous of their rights. By arguing with and battling people they betray an unsureness of themselves and a weakness in their personalities. The main practical point is *you can never win the cooperation of any person by violent onslaught or head-on argument.*

Let's not be always so sure we are right. Further, let's not feel we have to be so sure we're right. Einstein's theory of relativity knocked over a lot of other scientific theories. Scientists are always changing and improving their theories. They are not embarrassed by having to change their opinions. No scientist's face is red in facing changing theories. Why then shouldn't we also be flexible in readjusting our opinions?

What troubles so many people is that they know so many things that aren't true. To know them, they think they must know them absolutely. They feel they have to be positive. But,

as Wendell White notes, "To understand life is to recognize the many-sidedness of truth." *

When one person's positive belief clashes with another's positive belief, there's trouble. In the light of today's scientific standards, each is likely to be far too sure he's right. And there is usually a big emotional factor in such a clash of beliefs. People seem to feel there is something akin to being morally wrong in being factually wrong. Too often they feel they must, as a matter of prestige, stand up for their opinions, whether their opinions are about subjects that make any difference in their lives or not. They feel if what they *say* is proved incorrect, then *they* are wrong; and certainly they feel there is something shameful in being wrong.

One may well use great care in expressing disagreement with another person. Our language and our traditional use of it are such as to make it very easy to reflect upon the honesty of the person with whom we disagree. Words used in expressing a contrary or even diverging opinion may often imply, "You are a liar." And those are fighting words, no matter how trivial may be the subject under discussion.

To say, however politely, "You're wrong about that," or even "You're mistaken," may be taken by someone as implying in some degree that you consider him a liar.

Instead of giving the person our conclusion as to the truthfulness of what he says, would it not be much more courteous and sensible merely to offer him the facts we may have on the other side of the issue?

For instance, when a friend says "Hotsy James is the best batter in the American League," isn't it better not to say "That's not true"; but rather, "Hotsy's good, all right, but I noticed an Associated Press table of batting averages in the *Times* last night

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that put him No. 2 in the league. Eberle was placed first in that table."

This sort of a statement carries evidence that we have observed and tends to avoid the emotional dynamite that lies in a statement reflecting upon character of the other person.

Another practice that may be regarded with a mental question mark is that of standing on one's principles in every little issue with another person. "It was a matter of principle with me," a person will explain when a friend expresses astonishment at a violent dispute he has had with another, about a matter of no personal concern to him. Let's look at this "matter of principle" phrase coolly. We say it with some pride as if it indicated strong character. But, really isn't the term used by people to cover up the fact that standing on an issue as a matter of principle is often, perhaps usually, a matter of personal vanity?

So let's not be too positive in our talk with other people, and let's avoid those terms that may be implied to reflect on another's character.

Very few things are absolutely sure in this world. People who see this clearly do not have to be wavering or indecisive. Doctors observe certain symptoms, assume certain causes, and go ahead decisively on their tentative judgments. Other scientists do that all the time. In fact, it may be said that our entire modern technological civilization, which moves so fast and with such precision, is built on tentative findings of scientists, findings that are constantly changing. Incidentally, no one knows definitely what electricity is, yet everybody uses electricity with confidence.

Perhaps this seems like a lot of theory. But it is of the utmost importance in human relations that we do not fall into the too-positive form of statement, nor, worse still, into the habit of feeling in any way belittled if we have to modify or abandon our opinions.

The strong person does not "take issue" with people. He

does not criticize, complain, bicker, quibble, nag, nip, or needle. He does his part, and a little bit more, to make sure he is fair. But nobody pushes him around. He goes serenely on his way, conscious of his fairness, conscious of his own strength and independence. His actions speak louder than any words.

Especially in matters of small concern, he is apt to give way to others. On important issues he comes in with the full weight of the moral strength he has achieved through many a generous concession. Here he stands fast.

Nothing helps avert argument more than a sense of humor. It saves many a human situation. One able businessman made it a habit, when any visitor left his office, of sending him away with a laugh or a smile. People liked this executive, even when he turned them down.

As in every other personality trait, a sense of humor can be cultivated. Look for the lighter side and you'll find it. But the use of humor must be balanced with common sense, good taste, and consideration. Let's not fall into the habit of side-stepping serious issues with a wisecrack; such use of humor frustrates and infuriates people. There are many situations that must be met seriously. Our attitude should be suited to the occasion.

Worse than the habit of arguing is the trait of using sarcasm, even in good-natured banter. The sarcastic thrust leaves the victim at a loss, so that openly, or secretly, he resents having been placed in a position of inferiority. Even when used jokingly with our best friends, sarcasm is dangerous.

Making fun of people is dangerous. A person instinctively knows he may be destroyed by ridicule, so his reaction is deep-seated and intense. We'd better be as careful in using ridicule as we would in using poison or any other destructive element. The results may be tragic—for us!

Jealousy, fear, envy, and hate poison personality. If one has the habit of telling how he bawled someone out, how he gave so-and-so a piece of his mind, he ought to be careful. That's a

bad personality sign. That sort of talk is unpleasant to listeners. They will finally avoid the person who always seems to be in trouble with someone. People correctly suspect that the habitual critic or gossip may make remarks about them when their backs are turned. So let's not be destructive. Let's be constructive, knowing that when we build for others, we build for ourselves.

Isn't it true that when you meet someone you may say he has a pleasing personality, even before you speak to him? You gain the impression through the eye. It is based upon his appearance, his eyes, hair, carriage, his clothes, and all the physical aspects that you can take in at a glance.

But another factor is an association in your subconscious mind. We see certain qualities or features that remind us, without our realizing it, of someone we have known and liked or disliked in the past. This tendency toward judging people on sight is difficult to control, but we must guard against forming strong first impressions. The shape of a man's head, his hand-shake, whether or not he looks you in the eye, are not conclusive indices to character.

Yet people judge us in considerable degree by what they see. Important is a person's facial expression. Your smile says, "I like you." Nothing is more apt to make another person like you than your liking him. So the smile is personality's most winning expression. Thoughts are nearly always reflected in the face. A pleasant facial expression is cultivated by pleasant thoughts.

Walter Huston, the actor, long was in a play that required him to come on the stage in a certain scene with a smile on his face—half laughing, in fact. He told friends he was able to manage this expression, night after night, by thinking of his favorite story, that of a colored boy, Sam, having his first drink of Seltzer water. Asked, "How does it taste?" Sam replied, "Jest like mah foot's asleep."

Incidentally, as to appearance, we don't need to dress ex-

travagantly; in fact, elegant or fancy clothes sometimes are a handicap. A great salesman once said, "A salesman who hopes to get attention shouldn't wear pink spats." The habits of cleanliness and neatness appeal to most people. That goes for women as well as men. In fact, there is evidence that men criticize women for personal carelessness more than women do men for men's slovenliness. However, for either men or women, it isn't difficult to keep the body well scrubbed, nails and teeth clean, hair trimmed, shoes polished, and clothing clean. We should be well groomed, on the up-and-up, to appeal favorably to people.

Finally, a word about what some derisively call "personal charm." Nearly every leader has charm. Note the leaders in the Second World War; Franklin Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin, each in his own way, had personal charm. Call them power politicians, if you will; yet they used personal charm and their personality qualities to win and hold power and affect the destinies of the world's peoples.

All great statesmen, actors, leaders in every field have the common asset of charm. *Let's not think of personality in terms of an eighteenth-century drawing room or of a young ladies' finishing school. Let's think of it in terms of action, strength, and the faith we may radiate to other people.*

Everyone is justified in making the effort to cultivate a personality that is agreeable to other people. Call it charm or any other name. Good manners are a great part of it. No one criticizes the teaching of good manners to children; yet if they were not schooled in good manners, they wouldn't have good manners; they would be savages. We all owe it to ourselves and associates to cultivate personality habits that smooth the way to harmony in human relations.

The spirit of taking the initiative, the go-ahead spirit of overcoming obstacles, the positive attitude rather than the negative are essential to development of attractive personality. But all these must be related to a consideration for other people. All

rules for cultivating an agreeable personality revolve around a central principle. Think, speak, and act in terms of other people's interests.

The essence of the attractive personality is the quality of going out to people. This requires effort. People who fail to make the effort, because of feelings of inferiority or because of vanity, timidity, or lack of energy, will sit on the side lines, insignificant and envious onlookers in the game of life. We have to make the effort. Genius in human relations is the infinite capacity for taking pains in dealing with other people.

Principles and practices involved in building a winning personality include:

1. Character, the basis of sound personality, is developed by overcoming handicaps and difficulties.
2. Personal drive grows out of having a central purpose in life.
3. Action is the key to magnetic personality—action with other people.
4. "Going out to people" is the most attractive personality trait. Join up with people in games, social and civic affairs.
5. Arguments, ridicule, and sarcasm make a self-poisoning personality.
6. Never be the hero of your own story.
7. Fearlessness is essential.
8. Do your part and a little bit more, before you demand that others do their part.
9. Pleasant thoughts create an attractive face. A smile is the most attractive personality expression.
10. Keep clean and well groomed.
11. For an attractive voice, speak softly, articulate clearly, use the lower registers of voice.
12. Interesting people are interested in other people.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Come Out of Your Shell

"It's cramped and dark in here," the Unhatched Chick complained.

"Why don't you break out of the shell," asked Common Sense.

"I am tender and sensitive, and very, very delicate," the Unhatched Chick replied. "I'm warm and protected here. It may be cold outside. Besides, someone may hurt me."

When Burt Neibel came to a Midwestern city from a south Missouri town, he was no Lord Chesterfield. He wore a pair of nose glasses with flat lenses that blurred his eyes. His haircut said "small-town barber." He looked uncomfortable in his clothes. His too-small hat was teed too high on his head. His handshake was a disappointment. He carried a toothpick in his mouth after meals.

He was the last fellow you'd think would be a good salesman. How could he talk to the sophisticated city customers? But somehow he obtained a job as a salesman.

Right then he began to come out of his shell. He went out to people—awkwardly at first. He was treated with indifference by some, with condescending tolerance by others. But he persevered. He didn't seem to have much to offer. He hadn't been anywhere, he knew no important people, he hadn't read

much, and his education had ended after two years in high school.

But Burt did have something to offer—two quite influential things: his sunny disposition and boyish smile, and his genuine interest in the people he met. His customers and associates found, on better acquaintance, that he was “a nice guy to have around.”

People began to find Burt had savvy, too. He knew what was going on. He was observant and he had common sense. Other people might discuss side issues, but Burt's comments always went to the main point. He always did his part—and a little bit more. He was always ready to give you a hand when you needed help. He was not egocentric—his thoughts were not about himself but about other people. After a dozen years passed, he came to be generally regarded as the leader in his business circle. When there was a job of organizing to do, a job of bringing people together and getting them to work together, it usually fell to Burt Neibel. He became regional sales manager for a large enterprise and president of the national association of his industry. He became an urbane, thoroughly poised executive, a man who had the respect and affection of his associates. So Burt Neibel came out of a geographic, business, and social shell, like many another man prominent in American life today.

There is another kind of shell that is more difficult to get out of. It is the emotional shell that each person is inclined to build around himself. Every person, to a greater or less extent, builds this protective covering, a defense against possibility of being hurt by other people.

In some this amounts to a phobia. The protection of the ego becomes an obsession—the most constant and pressing concern of their daily lives. Ah, that precious little ego that quivers within the protective shell! The “Just-as-I-am,” “God-made-me-this-way!” Its religion is to oppose change fervently, to re-

fuse to come out to people. It feels an electric shock if you approach. A suggestion is resented as an insult. So it is with this half-blind, often vain, savage, delicate, morbid, hypersensitive ego. How, upon your approach, it closes up like a filmy sea anemone! Or, on occasion, how it blusters or grimaces at the approacher! "Leave me alone—ME, the untouchable!"

Let's consider the people with oversensitive egos. God only knows what agonies they suffer. Some of them are cases for the psychiatrist, some are only mildly distorted. There are those who cross the street when you approach, who hate the ordeal of introducing people, who fairly cringe with anticipated hurt at a suggestion affecting them personally. You couldn't possibly suggest anything to them for their own good. These are the people who most often try to escape from life and its responsibilities.

There are others who often seek to avoid making a mistake simply by not doing anything. It is quite true that in that way they do avoid mistakes and the resultant personal embarrassment they fear so much. But they also miss Life itself and all its thrills and satisfactions. They are the people who, by their withdrawal, make themselves insignificant in life. A friend of mine is fond of saying, "Say nothing, do nothing—be nothing!"

Most of these hypersensitive people are that way because they were badly brought up. They may have been sheltered too much by parents. Or fears or taboos may have been instilled in them by parents, teachers, or other adults early in their lives.

For the hypersensitive one who, by happy chance, sees the benefits of coming out of the shell, who wants to come out and be normal, the first remedy is to find out, if possible, what these early distorting influences were. In the most literal sense it may be said he needs self-education—"education," meaning leading out. With that understanding of the falsity of the influences, the next step is to chip one's way out of the shell and

face the world outside with courage. Mixing with people is the real, ultimate cure. An easy first step is to go out of one's way to greet people. Begin the day by speaking cheerily to members of the family. Smile and speak to the milkman, the conductor, the postman, and fellow workers. Introduce people; if we make a practice of it, it will come easy. Be actively interested in people and in their interests.

The oversensitive person is apt to fall into a tight little routine of daily living. He will find it a help to break up the routine. "Take a vacation every day" by doing something new. If he is in the habit of always having dinner at home, let him dine out occasionally. Eat different foods, see different people. Break the family routine with a little celebration once in a while. Get out of the rut.

Another thing is to cultivate an optimistic viewpoint, an attitude of liking people. Self-suggestion is a powerful influence. Let's say to ourselves and to others that we like people. Act the part. Smile at people when they look at you. This new attitude soon becomes the most attractive feature of our new personalities.

Self-suggestion can be an influence for good or ill. Here is an example of its ill-advised use:

When Bob Casey, just out of college, came to San Francisco to take a job, he went to live in a boardinghouse with ten other young men. It was a varied crowd. Each day they were all together at dinner. There was a lot of kidding and banter then, and each of them seemed inclined to represent a particular point of view.

For his part, Bob fell into the habit of being a "wet blanket." He objected to any proposal, to everything that was mentioned. His was the dim view. He became the cynic of the boardinghouse.

A few weeks of this was enough to fix the attitude, and our young friend found himself enshrouded in his own wet blanket.

He suffered an acute case of melancholia. He was *blue*. He began actually to dislike people. This included his roommate. So he took a room to himself, but that was quite the wrong step. He became really despondent. Soon he found it necessary to leave the city and his job, and get back to old friends for a while in order to clear his mind and personality of the crushingly depressing effects of his self-induced attitude. This lad came out of it, but many another has substantially ruined his life by adopting a cynical, negative attitude.

The point is that if a person is to live an interesting and satisfying life he must come out of his shell and join up with people; he must like people and go out to them.

"How," you may ask, "can you get a person to admit he's oversensitive and do something about it?"

Well, it isn't so difficult for a person to admit he is sensitive. On the contrary, a good many people are quite ready to say so outright. Some of them seem to take a satisfaction in it. "I'm terribly sensitive," they will say, with a feeling that this makes them something very special.

The main thing, then, and the first thing, is to bring such people to a realization that their sensitivity causes them to lose practically all the joy there is in living; that they suffer unnecessary agonies; that *people don't admire them and won't, in fact, give them any extra consideration because of their sensitivity*. Once the hypersensitive person sees the vast benefits to himself of coming out and joining up normally with other people, he is likely to make a start.

Those who are in doubt as to where the trouble lies may easily find out by asking themselves this question: Do people seem to insult me more than they do other people? Perhaps that question will be considered a little strong; so let's modify it and turn it around: Do I seem to have my feelings hurt more than the average person? That is a fair test question. Let's think about it.

People don't "pick on" a particular person without cause. There's no logical reason to believe that any given person is singled out for personal slights and affronts. The trouble must be, therefore, that the oversensitive person, thinking much too much about himself, misinterprets other people's actions and words as insults, affronts, or personal slights. If habitually he is having his feelings hurt, the reason for that must be in his own tendency to take chance remarks or small casual actions as directed against him.

Of course, people eventually get fed up with that sort of person. Most people eventually leave him alone—and that hurts the oversensitive person still more by adding to his inner anguish a sense of being isolated.

Isn't it reasonable that a person, however sensitive he may be, if he sees the personal benefits to be gained, may work his way successfully out of his shell? Let him just forget his timidity and his precious vain little ego, and go out to people. Let him begin with members of his own family by thinking and acting in terms of their interests and by showing them a lot of attention. Then let him proceed in the same way with close friends, then casual acquaintances and, finally, with the people he meets. If he will persist in this, he will find great rewards. His inner troubles, his worries, and his feelings of frustration will disappear. He will have a new sense of personal worth, a new sense of freedom and power, a new feeling of being appreciated. It will be a new and thrilling joy, not unlike that of the ugly duckling, which, after a despicable life, suddenly found itself a beautiful swan.

Let's recall the language of Hans Christian Andersen in describing this climax in the life of the duckling:

"He was very happy, but not at all proud, for a good heart never becomes proud. He thought of how he had been pursued and scorned, and now he heard them all say that he was the most beautiful of all beautiful birds. The lilacs bent their boughs

right down into the water before him, and the bright sun was warm and cheering. He rustled his feathers and raised his slender neck aloft, saying with exultation in his heart, 'I never dreamt of so much happiness when I was the Ugly Duckling!' "

But how about our dealings, as normal people, with hypersensitive persons? There is an old verse that points the way:

He drew a circle that shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle and took him in!

But oversensitive people often make trouble by adopting a critical, noncooperative attitude. They are hard to take into the "circle." That attitude is a defense of the ego. Often it may be modified with a little personal recognition.

A tactful businessman who used to be an active labor-union man cited these two widely differing illustrations of a method by which we may "bring in" with us such oversensitive people:

At several conventions of a labor organization, a certain delegate named Simmons had always objected and caused trouble. At one important meeting his attitude was of such concern that an informal caucus was held in a hotel room early the night before to consider what might be done about him. At first the major opinion was, "We'll just override Simmons." Our friend pointed out the dissatisfaction Simmons might cause, and persuaded others to let him work on the case.

Our friend found Simmons sitting in the hotel lobby and engaged him in conversation. He encouraged him to talk about the main issue up before the convention the following day, and let him know he understood Simmons's viewpoint and considered it important. Later in the evening he arranged a meeting to which Simmons was invited. Our friend cautioned his associates to give plenty of consideration to Simmons, to remember Sim-

mons was quick to resent a small remark as an insult. This attitude prevailed. Some modifications were made in the group's plans to meet Simmons's views. The next day Simmons spoke for the proposition on the floor of the convention, together with other delegates, and the proposition was carried. Simmons became a close worker with our friend thereafter.

This same friend told, incidentally, of another experience that occurred years ago. It was a very small incident, of the sort that occurs in everyone's life. He lived then in a duplex house, the other part being occupied by the landlord and his wife. He was on good terms with them; they talked together every day in a friendly way, but didn't visit in each other's apartments.

"We were young and full of high spirits," our friend continued. "We had a lot of parties. Pretty soon we noticed our landlord and his wife seemed a little cool. Well, my wife and I just invited them over for dinner. We laughed, talked, played the radio, and made a lot of noise, just as we had at the other parties. The coolness disappeared and, incidentally, we didn't get into later embarrassments or difficulties with our landlord by this social contact."

A typical Western promotional organization, covering a wide area of territory, has been managed by Frederick Johnson, for more than twenty years. His term of office has been continuous while other similar organizations have frequently changed managers. We had an opportunity to observe this organization and Johnson's technique of handling a number of difficult people, for there are always plenty of local critics. Whenever a critic bobbed up, one could be pretty sure that Johnson would soon have him on a committee, or maybe even on his board of directors.

The point of all these incidents is simply: When people draw a circle that shuts you out, just draw a circle that takes them in. The way to deal with people who are oversensitive is to recog-

nize them personally, in a very natural way, and make them a part of your circle.

Every one of us is sensitive in some way and to some degree. Some of the roughest talking and acting people are the most sensitive. This personal sensitivity is the cause of much of the trouble, worry, and frustration people experience.

All of us can remember instances that caused us to suffer anguish because we made a mistake or because, through no fault of our own, someone slighted or affronted us. In most of these cases people meant no affront, no offense. We should not withdraw from people because of an occasional rebuff.

Let's come out of our shells and join up with people. Let's consider their interests instead of being so morbidly concerned about having our feelings hurt.

People will like us and join with us for our own good, if we show we are interested in them and the things that concern them.

Let's bear in mind then:

1. Every person is inclined to build a protective covering over himself, a defense against being hurt by other people.
2. Oversensitive people suffer unnecessary agonies and miss life's thrills and satisfaction.
3. If one can understand the causes of oversensitivity (usually going back to early childhood), one can come out of his shell and join up with other people.
4. Think of other people instead of yourself.
5. Mix with people. Smile at them. Introduce them.
6. Break the routines of daily living.
7. Cultivate a habit of optimistic thinking.
8. To help oversensitive people who would shut you out of their circle, draw a circle and take them in.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Relax, and Keep Your Balance and Health

We once went to some boxing matches as guests of Billy Hogan, trainer of one "Boots" McNeer, who was to fight in the principal preliminary.

As the referee brought the two fighters together in the middle of the ring to give them final instructions, Hogan exclaimed, "My Bootsie looks right tonight!"

Bootsie looked anything but right to us. There he stood with slacked knees, his gloved hands dangling at the ends of his limp arms, his shoulders slumped, and his head so far forward that his chin was on his chest. As right as a stupid baboon, we thought.

"How right?" we asked.

"Relaxed as a dishrag," Hogan replied. "Watch him. He'll be fast and show lotsa umph."

So it proved. Boots had relaxation, rhythm, timing, and balance. His jabs were like lightning. His footwork, ducking, dodging, and weaving were smooth and easy. He went strong and knocked his man out in the sixth.

"This was an important match for Boots and me," Hogan told me afterward. "Boots got edgy a few days before the fight. Tension. A little tension is good, not too much. I eased him

down the last few days. He went along with me on that. He knows how it helps to be relaxed."

In those precious seconds between blows the professional prize fighter relaxes. His fist is no longer clenched. His arm and shoulder muscles loosen. His physical effort is directed only to keeping his body balanced on his feet.

His trainers have taught him this, and he has learned by experience that it adds to his stamina, adds power when he resumes.

The golfer, the swimmer, the skater, the tennis player, the fly caster, and others who take part in active sports, find the same added power and efficiency from relaxation. So, too, the musician and public speaker. So also the blacksmith, the soldier, the stevedore, and all who do manual work.

With relaxation go rhythm and timing, indispensable elements in the art of acting. Many people sing as they work or play. Relaxation, rhythm, timing, and balance—these are the very essence and spirit of playing, working, and living.

In this connection, we recall a middle-aged lady in whose pleasant home we occasionally had dinner. It was a delight to be there because she always took her dinner guests so easily—no hurry, no fuss, no sign of strain. She had to leave the table sometimes during dinner, for she had no cook or maid, but she was never flustered or apparently concerned in any way. Though that was many years ago, we still remember her home as a kind of haven of rest and relaxation.

Haven't you noticed, on the other hand, that when you are with a person who seems nervous, hurried, or worried, you, too, are uncomfortable? A fussy host or worried hostess gives a poor party. There is neither satisfaction nor pleasure in talking with a person who is nervous or fidgety, whose brows are knitted, or whose eyes are strained.

In big industrial enterprises you may observe that the men on the lower levels of authority frequently show strain, are

loud and blustery, often shout their commands; while the men at the very top, who carry the most troubles and responsibility, are usually quiet-spoken and relaxed. Effective top executives are more relaxed, it seems, when there is an emergency and, therefore, extra cause for nervous tension. These men have cultivated relaxation for two reasons: it keeps them from cracking up under the pressure and it helps others with whom they deal to keep calm, so that clear-headed decisions may be made without emotional disturbance.

Relaxation helps make our personality attractive; therefore, it makes for success in a social and business way. It makes the day's work go more easily. It aids health.

Some people find it difficult to relax. How are you going to relax if you've got into a situation where trouble has made you nervous, and your nervousness has made you sick, and your sickness has made you nervous? How are you going to break through the sort of situation that tends to go from bad to worse?

The advice given by Dr. Fink in his book, "Release from Nervous Tension," seems to make sense. Dr. Fink is a psychiatrist and a medical doctor. He advises breaking through first on the physical side. He offers a program for relaxing physically, and that appears to be a good place to start.

We are not going to repeat Dr. Fink's suggestions, though they are relatively simple; but here are a few that come from several other responsible sources and seem to make common sense:

Avoid assuming positions that prevent natural relaxation. For example, a person shouldn't sit with his legs twisted or with his feet hooked behind the legs of his chair. Bearing the weight of the legs on the balls of the feet while sitting causes some strain. Let the feet rest squarely on the floor.

Let the hands rest relaxed on the lap or on the arms of the chair as you sit.

Breathe slowly and deeply, clear down to the bottom of the

lungs. Breathe regularly. Try to get rhythm into your breathing.

For those who have difficulty in sleeping at night, here are a few suggestions that may help:

If you are an office worker, take a walk in the evening before you go to bed. Have a companion walk with you if possible, as casual conversation while you walk takes your mind off the problems of the day. Keep the mind off unpleasant or troublesome subjects. Take this walk regardless of rain or snow.

In preparing for bed, after you have most of your clothes off, shake out every muscle—the hands, the arms, the shoulders, the legs. Twist the body from left to right, right to left. Finally, with legs slacked at the knees, drop the body forward at the waist. Let it hang loosely, head and arms dangling. While in that position, shake the body out.

When you are ready to retire at night, approach the bed as W. C. Fields did. As a boy, he said, he had slept so much in piano boxes and on the ground under railroad bridges that when he saw the white sheets of a bed at night his smile pushed his ears back. Just clear the mind of problems and think only, "This is going to be wonderful!"

In bed, lie on your back with the arms down your sides. Tense every muscle from foot to head. Then relax completely. Do this several times. Completely let go. Breathe deeply. Don't twitch and scratch. The little itching places will soon be forgotten. Above all, don't think.

Let the weight go heavy on the bed. Don't brace yourself in any way. Observe how a dog lies as he sleeps—absolutely lax. That's the idea.

Worry about not sleeping causes more fatigue than not sleeping. Let's not worry about failure to sleep. Just relax and rest. We're sure to doze along through the night, and when morning comes we shall have had a pretty fair rest. Then if we give the supposedly exhausted body a tub or shower, following this with

a brisk rub with a rough towel, we're fairly human again. We'll be fairly human if we don't weigh ourselves down with a lot of self-pity.

Let's remember that nerve-tension is usually emotional in nature and that we can conquer it by our own attitude with cheerful, confident self-control. Not only should we not worry about sleeping; we shouldn't worry about the whole problem of nervous tension.

Let's not be overanxious about our anxieties. Problems and anxieties begin at the moment of birth and really give us the reason for living. People think a great deal of the mother's ordeal in childbirth, but few think of the child's ordeal at that same experience. Attached to its mother, floating effortlessly in a sort of Nirvana in a warm protective housing, the child is violently forced out into a drastically different and strangely new environment. Suddenly it is in a completely new world where it has to do its own breathing, eat its own food, and begin living and thinking as an individual who has to make his own way. No wonder people have anxieties. It takes more than a lifetime to get used to this strange world. But let's accept our problems and troubles as the main reason for living. Let's realize that these strange new situations that we meet all through life are the human challenge. They make life interesting. The way to growth and happiness is not to fret or worry, but to tackle and overcome problems.

Sometimes a little tension helps. One may well be relaxed but he shouldn't go slack. Eddie Twiggs, golf coach at Stanford University, often reassured members of his team when they spoke of being nervous, by telling them that he himself never played a fine match without having had a few tremors in his stomach on the first tee. Actors and public speakers testify to the same point. A feeling of being keyed up puts a person on edge for his best performance. But, again, this has to be offset

with a degree of relaxation. Harmony between relaxation and tension will give poise and controlled power.

Havelock Ellis, in his brilliant work, "The Dance of Life," deals with existence in terms of rhythm and harmony. The most profound thinkers recognize the most important aim in life is getting in tune with people, in harmony with the inevitable and controlling forces of the universe. The aim of religion, philosophy, and science is to bring man into harmony with the truths or laws that underlie human life.

Every actor and public speaker knows how relaxation makes possible split-second timing. So do the athlete and the musician. They achieve physical and emotional power through relaxation, rhythm, and timing.

Babies respond favorably to people who have a deft, sure touch. One of their earliest adverse reactions is against people who make sudden abrupt passes at them. Adults are always like grown-up children, and if we think of them in that way, it will help us understand other people, and ourselves. Let's remember that adults, like babies, dislike jittery people but like gentle, relaxed handling.

The principle of relaxation, rhythm, and timing runs through all the complexities of the arts and through all our everyday actions. Anyone can see that conscious control over bodily movements and speech adds grace and dignity to the individual who practices it, by eliminating the abrupt and the uncontrolled. Jittery, haywire people are hard on their own nerves and those of everybody else. Those with a sense of the cadenced flow of living are the most agreeable to live with and get the most joy from life. *This sense of relaxation, rhythm, and timing is an art that can be cultivated.*

While we are working out relaxation on the physical side, there is much that we can do on the mental side to bring the emotions under control of the thinking, reasonable part of the

brain. In fact, nearly everything in this book goes to that point. Here are some suggestions, some principles broad in scope, and some details of everyday living:

First, and most important, there is this from the psychologist, William James: "If we wish to conquer undesirable emotional tendencies in ourselves we must assiduously, and in the first instance cold-bloodedly, go through the outward movements of those contrary dispositions which we prefer to cultivate." In simpler words, assume the attitude we wish to attain, go through the motions, and thereby fix the habit. This matter, which is of first importance, is discussed in some detail in the concluding chapters on habit.

Second suggestion: Adopt the sound theory that "the best way to peel a sack of potatoes is to take one potato at a time and peel it."

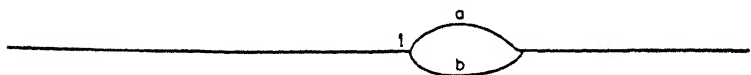
A businessman who deals with many diverse things declares that this homely precept has relieved him of nearly all feeling of nerve strain. He had been in the habit, he said, of trying to do everything *at once*. When he arrived at his office in the morning, he would whip himself up and all his assistants, as if everything before him had to be disposed of by 10 A.M. This caused turmoil within him and turmoil in his offices. He was snappy and irritable. His people were resentful because the impossible was expected of them. But when he adopted the one-potato-at-a-time principle, he arranged his schedule according to the importance or time element involved in the various things he had to do. Then he went calmly ahead, disposing of one item at a time. Of course, he never was completely without things to do (if he had been, there would have been no need of him on the job); but the adoption of this simple philosophy helped this aggressive man greatly. It will help most of us, too.

Another thing in this connection: This old saying, "Do it now!" has a lot of merit. If you put off an unpleasant or difficult task and worry about it in the meantime, you may finally have

done the equivalent of the job several times, depending on the period of delay and the amount of worrying. Do it now, and get rid of the problem. The more disagreeable the task, the more important it is that we dispose of it quickly.

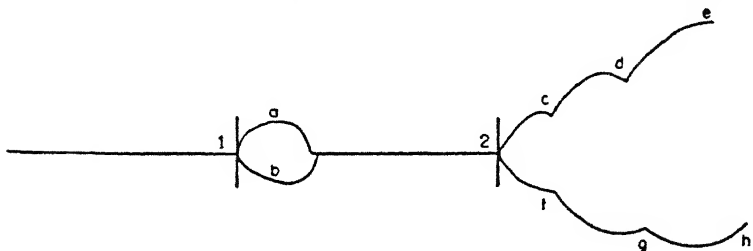
Third suggestion: take the worry and human conflict out of the job of making decisions.

Dr. W. J. Reilly in his book "The Twelve Rules for Straight Thinking," suggests a system that seems almost too obvious at first. But it works in the office or in the home. He presents it graphically. Suppose you are going along on a course of action and come to point 1 where an associate has brought a matter to you for decision:



In that case don't wear yourself out by mulling this over or arguing with your associate. Let your associate go ahead as he recommends, if he has made a recommendation. Or just decide it one way or another and push the matter ahead.

But, now you come to a point of decision, indicated by 2 below. You can see that if you take course *c* it may lead you to another divergence to *d* and *e*; and this decision is of major



consequence because, if, on the other hand you take course *f* it may lead to *g* and *h*. Because there is a lot of difference

whether you wind up at *e* or at *h*, you discuss this thoroughly with your associates and think hard before embarking on one course or the other.

So simple it almost seems silly, isn't it? Roll it over in your mind. Maybe you'll want to try it out in your home in dealing with your husband or wife. In several cases, it has eliminated lots of petty arguments and nervous tension.

Another point about making decisions is that it pays to make firm decisions.

We know a husband and wife who nearly drove each other frantic by making soft decisions, then willy-wallying around about them, recalling the decisions, and hashing them over.

Business acquaintances of ours had an associate who did much the same thing; worrying and arguing with associates about details of business reports, about whether or not, for example, there should be a period after the term "per cent," to take care of the technical abbreviation from the Latin "per centum." Who cares so long as the meaning is clear? That was the attitude of his associates; and it seemed to be sensible.

There are two points that may well be marked here: first, although it's helpful to know words and the rules for their usage, let's bear in mind that words and rules should be our servants not our masters; second, in any phase of life, let's not get wrought up and wrangle with other people over details of small consequence.

Emerson wrote that while he was trudging home from church the stately elms seemed to say to him, "Why so hot, little man?" So many of us little men make so much of such small troubles.

On the other hand, we know a lusty man who makes many mistakes, but he has also made a couple of million dollars. He has had a free mind and much pleasure out of life. When he makes a decision, that's it. He sticks with it until it works out, one way or another. If it works out poorly, he drops it com-

pletely and doesn't worry. If it works well, he pushes it with great vigor and persistence. He is a man of tremendous energy, and he usually rides right over his mistakes. This man is in business for himself and thus naturally has an advantage in making decisions over the man in a big organization or institution who has many persons and policies to consider and cannot afford to make any error of importance. Nevertheless, there is a point in this example that we might try out in our personal affairs.

In any event, one should not make soft decisions or worry about issues of small consequence.

Along this line, a Western rancher (of all people!) helpfully employs the advice given by Epictetus. This may be roughly paraphrased: A person's environment contains two sets of factors, those which are controllable and those which are not controllable. The wise and happy person is the one who concentrates on controlling the controllable items, and refuses to worry about the others. Most of the misery and confusion in life is caused by efforts to control the uncontrollable—as well as by neglect of the easily controllable ones.

Fourth suggestion: Learn the importance of laughter.

There is no more relaxing exercise than laughter. The tight bands of nervous tension let go in a delightful effervescence of good humor. Cultivate the habit of laughing naturally and often. People who laugh seldom worry. It's virtually impossible to think unpleasant thoughts if you're smiling. People who laugh do little quarreling. Laugh and keep sane.

"Of all man's functions that affect the body and soul together, laughter is the healthiest," said Dr. Christopher Hufeland. "Laughter aids digestion, circulation, perspiration, and has a refreshing effect on the strength of all organs."

Incidentally, it is an interesting and significant fact that insane people lack a sense of humor. This is pointed out by Wendell Johnson in his book, "People in Quandaries." Some of the insane giggle or go through some of the outward manifestations

of laughing, but practically none laugh in the ordinary sense of that word. Insane people are usually unbalanced by their concentrated, far-too-serious interest in themselves. This bars the possibility of laughing with people. There is a scientific basis for the advice, "Laugh and keep sane."

Fifth suggestion: Think before you indulge yourself in the false luxury of "blowing your top."

To give way to anger makes you angrier. "In rage," William James points out, "it is notorious how 'we work ourselves up' to a climax by repeated outbreaks of expression. Count ten before venting your anger, and its occasion seems ridiculous." *

Sixth suggestion: Keep in mind helpful word symbols.

Words affect our thinking. Keep in mind relaxing words, such as "calm," "serene," "harmony," "smile," "active," "alert," "generous," "good humor." Don't try high-pressure salesmanship on yourself; just remember these word symbols. One should never say "I'm nervous" or "jittery" or "burned up." The subconscious mind picks up such emotional or violent words and thoughts and uses them against us. Paste a list of the "good" word symbols in the corner of your mirror.

Seventh suggestion: Never discuss troubles or difficult problems at mealtime or bedtime.

Eighth suggestion: Eat reasonably.

If you fear a food, don't eat it; if you eat it, don't fear it. Never eat when you're hurried, worried, or tired. Bedtime and mealtime are opportunities for complete relaxation. Let's forget our troubles and enjoy our meals and rest. Nature demands these clear periods for recharging the batteries. We shall pay dearly if we ignore this natural law.

How we feel is quite directly reflected to others. The test in human relations comes when the going gets tough, when we don't feel well. So, most people who work indoors should have

* Reprinted from "Psychology" by William James, by permission of the publishers, Henry Holt and Company.

some physical activity every day, out of doors, if possible. Reasonable attention should be given to diet.

The eight suggestions above are designed to help us control our thinking and feeling in everyday life. We shall understand them better and be able to apply them more successfully, if we look a little deeper into the chief causes of human worries.

In a recent *Saturday Evening Post* article, Milton Silverman estimates that around five million people in the United States think they have heart disease and are the victims of their own fears and worries, victims of morbid anxiety. Crack-ups are on the upgrade due to frustration. Frustration results from situations with which people cannot cope, such as conflicting desires, natural drives clashing with social and moral standards. The number of mental cases and the number of psychiatrists are on the increase. Dr. Walter C. Alvarez of the Mayo Clinic is quoted as saying, "Every doctor should be a psychiatrist whether he wants to or not," and the most effective doctors have been just that.

Everyone in America is expected to be a success. Success is our national slogan. Nearly every individual feels the pressure on him or her to be a success. "What is the standard of success?" he asks, and he is confused and frustrated because, out of all the expressed or implied demands made upon him, he can't find a satisfactory answer. "Keep up with the Joneses?" "Be a successful parent?" "Be good?" "Look and act like a movie star?" All these pressures in different directions lead to frustration and nervous tension.

Let's ease the pressure on ourselves by admitting the impossibility of being a success by every standard. Let's decide the standard that is our ideal. In seeking such a standard, let's study the people we know. Just what are the traits of the happiest, most agreeable people we know? What can we do to adopt their philosophy and way of life? Let's limit ourselves to a few aims that go well together, and make an active and persistent effort

to achieve them. Let's not tear our nervous systems apart trying to achieve a number of conflicting aims.

While we are making this effort to keep from expecting too much of ourselves, let's also agree not to expect too much of other people. Let's not expect people to be perfect. Let's take human nature just as it is. People are not perfect. They are not always reasonable. They don't always act in their own best interests, by any means. Let's accept these facts. Let's be realistic, and live and work and play with people accordingly. We shall find that the habit of expecting and tolerating unreasonableness and error in our wives and husbands, our friends, and fellow workers enables us to keep relaxed and happy and to deal more calmly and helpfully with them.

Some people worry about their old age. A wonderful, aged woman, whose life had been full of service to others and who was living on a tiny pension, reassured us about one aspect of that. "There's plenty of enjoyment after seventy," she said. "Take things as they come. Make such reasonable provisions as you can for retirement, and readjust yourself gradually as you go along." That is just common sense, isn't it?

Joseph Henry Jackson, the San Francisco literary critic, tells an appealing story of a couple he knew:

The husband, a professional man, had always wanted to be a painter. He saved regularly over a period of years from his moderate income. When he was fifty-five years of age, he closed his offices and took up painting. Surprisingly to others, and perhaps to himself, he soon became a successful artist. He held several one-man shows and began to sell his paintings. They brought from \$200 up, and he made an adequate income for fifteen years, to the time of his death.

One time during this period his wife remarked to a friend that she lacked a hobby. The friend recommended that the wife take up painting, too—that she take up water colors as a variation from her husband's work in oils. The friend helped

outfit her, and the wife in a few years became a successful artist herself—more successful than her husband.

Here was a couple that successfully readjusted and, in later life, made a success by any measure you might reasonably apply. Naturally, we can't all be artists, but we can all find recreating activities suitable to our natural talents that will help mightily to keep us busy and happy.

Many men feel frustrated because they cannot keep up with the demands of business and family. Many parents have a consuming desire to hold the child in their home although they know that this may ruin the child's development. Such conflicts between selfish desire and moral right cause much of the anguish that make nervous cases out of people.

We have to resolve these conflicts. Admittedly, that suggests that each of us will have to adopt a self-made philosophy—a practical plan of action that we can go along on.

This involves the principle of balance. Literally and figuratively it may be said that without balance a person is quite sure to fall on his face in life.

Avoiding extremes, let's endeavor to find a reasonable middle course. Even there we shall find that the middle course itself is not always and invariably advisable. Sometimes one has to take an extreme course. It may be noted, in passing, that if it were not for extremists, such as inventors and geniuses of various sorts, man would not have made the progress he has.

Yet the principle of balance underlies everything we do. In considering human relations we have to balance the fact that there are some characteristics common to all people against the opposing fact that every person is different and must, therefore, be treated as an individual. We should be considerate of others and yet firm in our dealings with them. We should be active yet relaxed. In the details of human behavior, laughter is a wholesome influence, but a person who is always breaking into loud

laughter becomes a nuisance and a bore. So we have to maintain balance by the use of our common sense.

The world is full of 10 per cent "truths," half "truths," a few 75 per cent "truths"; and as for the more-nearly-absolute "truths," we dare not estimate how few these are. And these "truths," whatever the percentage of absolute, seem to have a way of changing. Einstein changed a lot of conceptions of truth with his relativity theory. Yet already that new "truth" is under attack. We have to change along with the truths of various percentages that are discovered or altered—like the doctors, who began to use sulfa drugs, then penicillin, and later developments beyond those. Yet, it may be noted, sulfa, now relatively old, is still used along with the new drugs.

We are all prone to make too many flat statements. We are inclined to say, if a thing or person isn't good, that it or he is bad. Yet, as a matter of fact, things and people are neither black nor white. Life is much like a great field of gray, with spots of white and black here and there.

We seem much inclined to want unmodified statements from other people. In dealing with doctors, for instance, people want them to say right out, after examination, "You've got malaria. I'll give you quinine. That will cure you." Whereas the doctor with a truly scientific attitude cannot go much further than to say, "Your symptoms indicate you may have malaria. I prescribe quinine, because that has long been effective."

Out of all the various degrees of "truth" we have to build a personal philosophy of positive action, on which we may proceed vigorously. At the same time we must be ready to change from day to day to meet new conditions and fresh disclosures of "truth." This may seem complex, but it is fairly easy if we acquire an attitude of being ready and willing to readjust.

Human life consists of continuous readjustment. In walking, it has been said, a person tends to fall to one side and puts out a foot to keep himself in balance; then he tends to fall to the other

side and puts out his foot on the other side. So there is a continuous correction of errors, but *all the time he is going forward*.

Helps toward relaxation, balance, and harmony:

1. Relaxation and the accompanying qualities of rhythm, timing, and balance are vital in maintaining physical health, easy relationships with other people, and in attaining peace of mind and happiness.
2. To relax physically, avoid positions that prevent natural relaxation. Don't sit with legs twisted or feet hooked behind chair legs. Keep the soles of your feet squarely on the floor. Let your hands relax in the lap. Take a walk before bedtime at night. Lie in bed like a dog—absolutely lax. Breathe deeply and with rhythm.
3. Don't worry about not sleeping.
4. A little tension is good; it helps you to put on your best performance.
5. "Best way to peel a sack of potatoes is to take one potato at a time and peel it."
6. "Do it now" and get rid of the task.
7. Don't fret over decisions about small matters.
8. Make firm decisions. Don't recall them and hash them over again.
9. Laughter is nature's great relaxer.
10. Don't indulge yourself in the false luxury of blowing your top.
11. Never discuss troubles at mealtime or bedtime.
12. Let's resolve our conflicting desires, develop a personal philosophy of action, and keep our balance.

PART FIVE

Family Circle—
Haven or Arena?

CHAPTER 17 How to Be Happy Though Married

CHAPTER 18 Children Are People, Too

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

How to Be Happy Though Married

An unhappy marriage will affect our whole outlook on life. It will also affect our business relations and can, very easily, be the cause of our failure to make good in our chosen work.

Just why do so many good, well-meaning people fail to make a success of marriage? Let's see if we can arrive at some sort of understanding of this very complex problem. Let's start by asking: Just what do men and women want—or not want—out of marriage?

In a personal survey we have shaken down the things women want from marriage into five main classifications: (1) children, though this fundamental want may be felt dimly or not at all at first, (2) physical affection and social companionship, (3) personal recognition and attention, (4) security—that is, a home, money in the bank, or the equivalent to safeguard the family, and (5) a feeling of working, playing, and going along with their husbands for a common purpose.

In the survey of men, what did we find? It may surprise you, but men had the very same fundamental desires. There were varying degrees of importance placed on the various desires, but the basic feelings of need from the marriage relationship were identical with those of women!

On the negative side of the picture, what are the chief faults that men and women see in their marriage partners? Dr. George Gallup, director of the American Institute of Public Opinion, conducted nationwide surveys on this. Here are the answers in the order of the importance that wives and husbands attached to them:

<i>Men's Main Faults, as Women See Them</i>	<i>Women's Main Faults, as Men See Them</i>
1. Drinking	1. Nagging
2. Thoughtlessness toward wife	2. Extravagance
3. Selfishness	3. No interest in home
4. Domineering, bossy	4. Night-clubbing, drinking
5. Other women	5. Gossiping
6. Stingy	6. Selfishness
7. No interest in home	7. Too many outside interests
8. Take wife for granted	8. Domineering, bossy
9. Complaining, criticism	9. Untidy, careless personally
10. Gambling, smoking	10. Other men

Here, in the "don't-wants" from marriage, as in the "wants," we find an amazing agreement between the sexes. There is a difference in degree of emphasis on certain dislikes, but a substantial agreement.

So men and women are not so very unlike each other. To be sure, there is a difference—and the story goes that when the fact was mentioned in the French Chamber of Deputies, the deputies arose in a body and cheered, "*Vive la différence!*" Yet, men and women are really much alike, not only biologically but in temperament and character. The difference in the way they act is due largely to environment—the difference in the sort of problems which each has to solve or to which each has to adjust.

Incidentally, we now must relinquish the idea that women are the weaker sex. Dr. Albert Wiggam, in a recent article in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, points out that women live longer. The average life span of women is sixty-eight years to sixty-

three for men; and from fifteen to forty-five, right through the childbearing period, there are proportionately more male than female deaths every year. In extreme age, the women far outnumber the men. The supreme shocker, for men, is the evidence that shows six males suffering nervous and emotional breakdown to every five females. So it seems, in short, about time for men to quit belittling the status of women, for women to quit trading on men's attitudes toward them, and for both to start off even.

But, you will ask, if men and women are so alike and if they want about the same things out of marriage, why is there so much conflict between the sexes?

Let's take the case of Betty and Jim, typical normal, high-spirited youngsters. They liked the same sort of things: dancing, swimming, and parties. They came from the same sort of homes and had the same education and general tastes. Psychologists say that's good; that, while opposites may sometimes attract each other, people with similar backgrounds and traits are more likely to have successful marriages.

Betty and Jim began with a feeling of great physical attraction and of unity—of being one. This continued happily for some years.

Then Jim "got wrapped up in his business," a common experience for men. It's a strong urge; man's first law of nature is to provide for the future, to assure *survival*.

Jim forgot the wedding anniversary; his wife's birthday. He gave up parties occasionally to work at night. He made love, to use a term of philosopher Will Durant, with "absentminded punctuality." The old-time zest and spontaneity dwindled.

One day Betty came home with a fifty-dollar hat.

"Ye gods!" said Jim. "Why did you spend all that money for a hat when we're trying so hard to get ahead?"

"Don't be stingy," Betty snapped, and so began their first real quarrel.

Yet Betty, in buying the expensive hat, was trying to compensate in some way for the lack of affection, personal appreciation, recognition, and attention she expected from her husband.

On his side, Jim had a feeling of doing far more than his part. Wasn't he working like a slave? Surely Betty knew how fond he was of her; surely she realized he was really working for her future as much as his own.

But deep in the heart of Betty was the craving for a dozen red roses with an affectionate message, some interest in her new dress, more sympathetic interest in her daily activities. They both thought it was a quarrel about money, but the causes lay far deeper than that.

So the oneness of the union was broken into two egos—each trying to go its own way.

We must never forget that married men and women are people. In marriage they act like people. They seek to compensate for lack of fulfillment of basic human needs and desires. Not that they think it all out; but impulsively, they will pay you back, for good or ill. For any fault on the one side, the offended person may pay you back with a fault from the other. It may go along with action and interaction, from bad to worse.

Then, how does one break into that situation and make the other person realize he's doing wrong?

Practically everyone resents being told anything for his own good. It's unfortunately true that there is seldom real communication between husband and wife. We know a wife who couldn't tell her husband that his habit of picking his nose was repulsive to her—so she divorced him. Communication is urgently needed between husband and wife and it should be understood in the beginning that each may tell the other of actions that hurt or annoy. However, it is seldom that such an understanding is achieved.

So we can offer no better suggestion than this: Remember the basic rule for good human relations: think, speak, and act in terms of the other person's desires and interests. Don't nag or complain or criticize. Don't argue—even if you have the most logical of reasons, the most convincing facts to argue with. Don't expect your mate to be reasonable or be too certain that you are.

All these troubles are emotional in nature. They come out of the ego, the unthinking, unreasoning "old devil ego." And actions that create favorable emotions are best to meet any such situation. Actions speak louder than words.

If your husband or wife takes you for granted, is extravagant or interested too much in persons or things outside the home, sit down and think out the reasons why. If he or she is domineering, change the subject to something pleasant and speak softly and pleasantly. The psychologist Lawrence Gould says, "Showing your appreciation of the things your partner does which please you will get you more in the long run than reproaches for behavior you dislike." When the other person does something good or helpful, don't fail to go all out with your praise.

The man whose wife buys fifty-dollar hats should try—and this will be difficult—to be as smart as she is. Bring her a box of candy. Take her out to dinner the way he used to do. Sure, he's sick of eating in restaurants and it costs money, but try it. He'll likely find in cool analysis it's worth the time, money, and effort. Try several such courses of action to meet what may be her unfulfilled desires. One will click.

The main point, when your mate treats you badly—nags, drinks, spends too much money, or stays away from the home—is usually that he or she is disappointed in the marriage relationship. Husbands and wives, like other people in other relationships, will pay you back. And it should be noted that they take this action unconsciously. It is an emotional reaction. Sel-

dom do they pay you back "on purpose" after thinking the matter out.

In looking for causes of disappointment, let's bear in mind that the principal thing each normal person expects in marriage is a lively, personal interest of the other person in himself or herself. The basic rule in marriage, as in other human relationships, is: think, speak, and act in terms of the other person's interests. People will tolerate affronts and injuries to a greater extent than indifference. Indifference sends more marriages on the rocks than any other cause.

The extreme opposite of indifference is the active help one person gives another. Let us tell you the story of one of the happiest couples we have known:

When Roger Sutherland came back from the First World War, he was blind and nerve-shocked. Flying over northern France, his plane had been shot down. He parachuted into a field saturated with poison gas. His body was burned and his eyes were affected.

Esther, his fiancée, spent all her time with him when he returned home, encouraging him through protracted treatments and operations. He improved but remained discouraged because he could not see.

Before enlisting, he had planned to go to college. Esther would not let him drop this ambition. She persuaded him to register. Then they were married. She attended lectures with him and made notes. She read his textbooks aloud to him. She literally read him through the college.

By the time Roger received his degree, he was normal in every respect, except for his eyesight, which was gradually improving. He started an insurance agency and made money.

Roger and Esther were lively, active people. The movies were impossible for Roger, but they went to parties and lectures. They had no children of their own, but they were god-parents to all the youngsters for blocks around. They were fond

of laughter and good times—for other people and for themselves. They were far from being saintly in the old-fashioned sense of being some sort of ethereal martyrs. Roger particularly had an earthy, lusty sense of humor and was a famous teller of funny stories.

The happiest people we know are apt to be like that—people who have met and overcome difficulties together. People who go in for service to each other and for service to other people. People who have a sense of humor. People who are brave.

A little forethought will avert most “spats” and arguments that, usually quite unnecessarily, punctuate married life. By “forethought” we mean thinking in advance as to where the first remark is going to lead, instead of saying just what comes naturally. For example,

Joe comes in to breakfast looking mean. Jane says, “Your face looks like a meat ax. Are you mad?”

What is a fellow going to say then? If Joe says, “No, dear,” Jane will probably reply, “Well, you look like you’re plenty mad,” and they’re off to the races. Or if he says, “Yes, I’m mad,” and tells her why, it’s even worse.

This is what is in his mind. “Ye gods, that indigestion I had last night! You’d think Jane would have had better sense than to have ham hocks and cabbage for dinner when she knew I was going to have a hard day yesterday and would come home dog-tired. That medicine I took at 1 A.M. didn’t do any good, and I was so jittery this morning I cut myself in four places with that dull razor. Now my stomach is churning and my mouth tastes like old shoes soaked in vinegar.”

With all this in mind he says coldly, and he thinks, with rare self-restraint, “Just leave me alone, please.”

But little Jane, who got up feeling so cheery this morning, keeps pushing in to find out what’s the matter and finally Joe slams out of the house without saying good-by.

That evening he's feeling better, but Jane is worn out—what with all the dreary household routine and on top of that having the car fixed, a man's job, and the children running wild, and the delivery man bringing only half the order. But she isn't coldly silent as Joe was. She talks and talks about all the troubles of the day, in a high shrill voice, with nervous tension in every facial expression and every nerve.

"For the love of Pete," Joe finally shouts, "do I have to come home to a flood of grief every night?"

And so again the battle of the sexes is on.

Well, what is the answer? Isn't it common sense for the calm one to keep calm? Better not say anything. Just show a little sympathy. A pat on the cheek to show you understand. Put your arm around her, gently—just a little understanding gesture. Let the conversation resume naturally, about commonplace subjects, and speak mildly. Is that hard to do? It certainly is, but it pays big dividends to the one who is thoughtful enough and wise enough to do it.

Boredom is another curse of married life. Interrupt the routine. Even if you're not much interested in baseball, try going to a ball game some night. Let the man come out of the dreary silence of his newspaper reading, lift his sitting apparatus from the bog of the easy chair. Let the woman cut short the forty-minute phone talk with that character-assassin, Mrs. Jones. Then take a walk together—even if it's raining. Or drive out to the bluffs or the water front and look at the city. Use imagination in getting out of the rut. Put a little fresh, new embroidery on the dulling fabric of married life.

One poisonous fly in the ointment of married life that Dr. Gallup mentions in the items "other women" and "other men" is jealousy. Of course, jealousy may be justified; and in that case a person has the choice of winning the wanderer back with great thought as to his or her needs and desires, or of blowing the union apart with direct assault.

But jealousy with little or no justification is one of the most irritating influences in married life. Such jealousy may not be directed to "another woman" or "another man." A woman may be jealous of a man's work: "he thinks more of his business than he does of me."

But the wife has to bear in mind that the man is following his drive for survival, which in everyday life means a career. No end of trouble is caused in marriage by the failure of the wife to recognize that this is naturally a man's *major* drive in life. She might as well accommodate herself to the inevitability of that fact.

But on the other hand, the wise and thoughtful husband will bear in mind the likelihood of his wife's lack of understanding. Accordingly, he will temper his conduct and seek to give her the personal attention, recognition, and affection that a woman desires and needs. The wise man will realize that a woman's needs are quite as deep as his own need for conquest, for laying up money and substance against the future. And speaking of affection, a man too often fails to realize that a woman wants him not only to show his love by his actions but to *say* it—to say the words "I love you."

It is the old stupid ego that leads one married partner to try to dominate the other. The cure for this is to think. Think it through. Suppose you're successful in reducing the other partner to the "yes, dear," "no, dear" status. If you are a woman, will you be proud of such a husband? Will he be the kind of man who will go out into the world and bring home the bacon? If you're a man, don't you think outsiders will despise you as a man with the soul of a pig? Can one imagine, if he has reduced his wife to nothing, that his friends will regard him as a strong, admirable man?

Perhaps the single principle for successful marriage lies in this, that "ye shall be one flesh." The term one "flesh" un-

doubtedly is used to make easy understanding for us humans who are inclined to think and understand in terms of physical terms. The meaning is one spirit; to be one.

If a couple can maintain that sense of oneness, the conflicts, irritations, and misunderstandings that grow out of the intimate living together of two human beings, who in many physical and mental respects are fundamentally different, will be resolved. A person cannot battle himself. One would not take offense at oneself, would not belittle one's own self.

If we, in the marriage relationship, can keep this awareness that we are one, there can be no difficulty between us. We shall win through to happiness.

Consider these suggestions looking to a happy married life:

1. Men and women want the same things from marriage: affection, companionship, appreciation, security, children, and feeling of common purpose.
2. Their "don't wants" are about the same: nagging, taking one for granted, thoughtlessness, drinking, complaining, jealousy, stinginess, and extravagance.
3. Surface causes of disputes are seldom the real causes of marriage unhappiness. The cause usually is failure of one, or both parties, to find what they expected, what they need, from the marriage.
4. Let's try to find the fault or lack in ourselves and cure that, instead of complaining of the other fellow.
5. Praise for good deeds brings better results than criticism for bad ones.
6. Think, speak, and act in terms of the other person's interests.
7. Beware of self-pity.
8. Most married people are starved for appreciation from their mates. Both husband and wife hate to be taken for granted.

9. Interrupt the family routine once in a while. Go out to dinner or to a ball game.
10. Never say anything that belittles your mate in the presence of other people.
11. "Ye shall be one flesh." The spirit of oneness is the secret of successful marriage.
12. Don't dispute over small issues. Let the other fellow have his way.
13. Laughter is the sovereign preventive of marriage troubles.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Children Are People, Too

What are children like when they start off in life? Well, babies are people, too. They start off with two of the basic drives or desires of humankind: the urge for survival, which is the first law of nature, and the desire for personal recognition.

So the baby wants food, shelter, a feeling of security. It cries for food, and it cries if jostled or from the sudden approach of the unfamiliar. It needs to be constantly reassured by protective kindness.

The most cherubic baby starts out with no more civilized manners than a savage. Without sufficient training it will still, at the age of four, be grabbing with its hands in the dish of mashed potatoes. So it seems pretty obvious that a child requires training, physical training from the beginning, and mighty soon social training.

From birth two sets of influences are at work forming the child's character. First of these are the inherited tendencies. Heredity is important, but it is a complex of traits from so many millions of ancestors that nearly every child has great potentialities for either good or evil development. There are always good tendencies to be encouraged and bad tendencies to be discouraged; and that's where the parents come in.

For in environment, comprising the other set of influences upon the child, the parents and the home are overwhelmingly

important. Especially can the importance of the parental influence be seen in the light of the findings of psychologists that the general outlines of a person's life pattern are fairly well set out during the first five years of his life.

Let's look at the importance of this parental influence a little closer. If parents nag, shout and wrangle, and keep the home in a state of turmoil, the children are pretty sure to show the effects of the turmoil. They are apt to be nervous, jittery, loud, and ill-mannered. Parents should relax in the presence of their children.

If children are neglected, bullyragged, or belittled, they will show effects of that treatment in one way or another. They may be resentful and, like other human beings, seek to pay parents back for the ill-treatment. They may pay them back with delinquency. Girls, so treated, may "go wrong," as has been observed by professional social workers; and the boys may join up with gangs of juvenile hoodlums. Either may put into action in later life their feeling of "the hell with my folks" by becoming alcoholics.

But, avoiding neglect, parents can easily go to the extreme in the other direction. We have all heard of "momism," the influence of mothers who coddled their sons to the extent that their boys cracked up emotionally under strain of the war. In the controversy that followed this accusation against the mothers, there were plenty of people who came to the defense of the mothers. Some of them pointed out, quite correctly, that the common tendency of fathers to pay little attention to the children was as much to blame for maladjusted children as were the mothers' spoiling and coddling.

It is significant, however, that in this whole controversy there was no one who denied that the influence of the parents was the outstanding control of the child's character development. No one denied that the praise or blame for children who succeed or fail rests with the parents.

In no phase of human life are good common sense and balance more important than in rearing children. Those who have made the deepest study of this most important subject are agreed that the child must have love and affection to give him a sense of security in a world which seems strange and dangerous and which is, in fact, strange and dangerous to the very end of adult life. On the other hand, coddling and lack of firmness make weak character and lead the child to fail to do its part in human enterprise, to expect too much from other people. Children thus spoiled in early life can hardly be expected to be successful in marriage where so much depends on a spirit of fair play and on great consideration for the interests of the other person.

A human being coming into this new world learns only by experience. If a child finds that it can avoid the consequences of bad actions by lying, it will become a liar. One should not blame the child. One should blame the parents who condone the lie or whose lack of understanding—impatience or too great sternness or habit of imposing too great punishment—caused the child to lie rather than come out frankly with the truth.

No good purpose is to be served by constantly telling the child to "be good." Too often the child comes to associate the word "good" with some unpleasant parental discipline. If we use the word "good," let's associate it with something desirable for the child. Let's be specific as to the suggested action and explain how such action will work out for his good.

Because children learn only by actual, personal experience, they should be permitted, with some suggestions and guidance at first, to make their own decisions. They should be allowed to reap the benefit of good decisions and they should not be sheltered from the consequence of their own folly when they make bad ones. It takes a lot of strength of character on the part of parents to follow this rule, but the child is sure to be

handicapped if it is not permitted to learn by hard experience early in life.

Parents often disagree about discipline in dealing with children. Often they work at cross purposes. The father may believe in strict discipline, while the mother believes in love and affection. The stricter the father becomes, the more the mother seeks to make up for it with the child in an excess of attention and coddling. The more the mother spoils the child, the more the father feels constrained to beat down. Now the child is just a human being, and not very experienced either, so think of the conflict set up within its nature! No wonder children are so often confused. No wonder they so often suffer from snarls in their personalities, and later seem so inconsistent in their dealings with other people. Parents have to get their minds together, and this is quite sure to require compromise on both sides.

Always parents should restrain their immediate impulses in dealing with their children. Spankings and like punishments should be corrective and not caused by a parent's anger. Bodily punishments, or any punishments, should be administered with evenhanded justice and only to the extent that they bring good results.

Too often the wants of children are satisfied as soon as they develop. One of the greatest satisfactions in life is to want something very, very much—really yearn for it—and eventually obtain it. Children whose every want is anticipated soon grow bored with life. They become blasé. And what is more pathetic than a person who is bored and blasé while still in his teens? The great tragedy at any age is not in wanting something one does not have, but in not wanting anything. Then there is no interest or zest left in living.

Let your child make an effort. This rule applies at the earliest age. Angelo Patri, the child specialist, says, "When the child reaches for the toy he dropped, don't run to hand it to him. He will not thank you for cheating him of the use of his reach, for

by doing so you deprived him of a great satisfaction that results from a successful grasp."

Other common-sense suggestions:

Don't force. If you wish your child to learn how and like to use tools, have the tools available in a place where they may be easily used. Most important of all, let the child see you use them. When he shows some interest, let him help you use them. If you wish the child to read books, don't nag at him to read. Keep suitable books around where they are convenient to him. Read to him and let him read to you. In such cases drop an occasional suggestion as to the pleasure and profit of using tools or reading books.

Strong and excited language is to be avoided. It has just as bad or worse effect on the child as it does on you. The child will react strongly and excitedly to strong and excited language. If you want a calm, well-poised child, keep calm and well-poised yourself.

Give the child family chores. Few persons have turned out well in later life without the training in responsibility that comes from performing little tasks about the home. You can make a game of it: see how many saucers Mary can wipe in five minutes.

Praise good performance. Those who do not have small children are likely to make fun of parents who seem overly proud of the child's early, commonplace accomplishments. Let's remember that these first attainments are in fact very big and important to the child. It is better to err on the side of too much rather than too little encouragement.

If the child is finicky with food, don't force it. Give it small portions and not too many. Don't comment on the child's poor eating habits. Also, incidentally, examine your own habits with food. If you are finicky, the child is likely to be finicky too.

Accentuate the positive. Avoid nagging the child for being dirty. On the other hand, speak of the delights of the bath and

the pleasure of being clean. Make the job of cleaning up a game.

Children are very suggestible. One should be careful not to say to a child that he is "bad," "lazy," "clumsy," or "dumb" or otherwise suggest undesirable characteristics. The child may adopt the attitude attributed to him.

Children can be taught to enjoy themselves. To live life with zest, to enjoy the green fields and the fresh air. The beauties of nature and of music nearly always have to be pointed out. Children should be so conditioned that life is interesting and challenging to them. They should thrill to each new experience as life unfolds. Parents can help in this by living life with their children, *with gusto*.

Let's not try to develop abnormally normal children. Variations from the norm have produced many extraordinary characters that have contributed much to the progress of human life. Variations produce interesting personalities. If the child is happy and makes progress in some extraordinary way, let's not try too hard to make him conform to routine standards.

André Maurois, the French writer, makes this wholesome comment that puts the whole philosophy of child rearing in a few words:

"A happy childhood is one which is presided over by united parents who love their children tenderly, impose a steady discipline, and see to it that a conspicuous equality between them is preserved. Inevitable changes in character occur at stated periods; advice must be wisely and sparingly given, and the most effective advice is the setting of a good example."

The job of being a parent is the most difficult and most important job in the world. The responsibilities of it cannot be dodged by any parent.

"If we paid no more attention to our plants than we have to our children," Luther Burbank once said, "we would now be living in a jungle of weeds."

For the consideration of parents:

1. A child is subject to two great sets of influences: its inherited traits and its environment.
2. The innate traits are inherited from so many millions of ancestors that the possibilities for good or evil development are almost limitless. Environment, therefore, maybe a greater factor than heredity.
3. The actions and attitudes of parents are the influences of overwhelming importance in environment. No parent can dodge the responsibility.
4. Common sense and balance are the bases for good parenthood. Affection is necessary to give the child a feeling of security. Firmness and discipline are necessary to develop strength of character. Discipline carried to the extreme may break the child's spirit, on the one hand, or cause a resentful flareback on the other.
5. Children proceed in life on an experimental basis; they persist in habits that win immediate returns for them. Parents, with a longer view, would do well to direct children into courses of action that will pay them in the long run.
6. Children will stay selfish savages in many respects unless they are trained to conform to social and moral codes.
7. Children should not be cheated of the satisfaction of making their own way in the world. They should reap the benefits of good actions and should suffer the consequences of their own folly.

PART SIX

Habits Make or Break You

CHAPTER 19 Habit, Your Magic-working Slave

CHAPTER 20 Can You Bear to Face the Mirror?

CHAPTER 21 Turn Your Mistakes into Assets

CHAPTER 22 Let Habits Work for You

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Habit, Your Magic-working Slave

When you get up in the morning, habits take you in tow. Far more than half the things you will do that day will be fixed in advance by habit.

If it were not for habit, for example, the day would be taken up simply in dressing. You would be exhausted before you finished. You may test this yourself. If, in putting on your coat, you customarily thrust your right arm into the sleeve first, try putting in your left arm first and note the difficulty.

"Think of the pains necessary to teach a child to stand," says one psychologist, "of the many efforts which it must make, and of the ease with which it at last stands, unconscious of any effort."

If it were not for skill established through habit, it would take you days to read this page.

Habits determine nearly every action a person takes in relation to other people. It is largely habit that makes one man speak gruffly and another man speak pleasantly; that makes one man crowd through a doorway ahead of others and another man let others pass first. Habits in dealing with people go deeper than manners. It is habit that makes a person blame the other fellow, have a chip on his shoulder, lie, gossip, or evade respon-

sibility. Habits determine whether or not, and to what extent, a person follows the basic rule of good human relations—think, speak, and act in terms of other people's interests. The habits of a person determine whether people list him as a grouch whom they avoid, or as an agreeable personality whom they like to help.

Two striking cases illustrate how vitally habits affect the lives of people:

A couple recently visited their former home town.

"Is Bertha Ames, the schoolteacher, still here," they asked. Bertha Ames, they were told, had killed herself.

"A few years ago a change came about in the way Bertha treated people," a friend told them. "She became very critical. Everybody here had known her a long time and we had all liked her. We didn't think much about it at first. The change took place gradually. Some people thought she was ill, but the doctor said she was all right physically. Her attitude got worse and worse. She fell into the habit of avoiding people. Later she literally turned her back on her old friends. Well, naturally there didn't seem to be anything to do about Bertha except to leave her alone. Then finally last spring she did away with herself. She gave no intimation of what she was about to do. She just left a one-line note. 'Nobody loves me,' it said."

Here was a case similar to that of the suicide mentioned in the first chapter. It was a fatal habit that left Bertha Ames, finally, with no reason to live. It was her habit of shutting herself off from people that shut people off from her. That left her with no one to live for. That is the same thing as having no reason to live, because the reason for living lies in other people. It lies in being wanted, needed by, and appreciated by other people. The time-worn words in her note told her story.

Habits in dealing with people may lead to unhappiness and disaster—or to happiness and success. In the latter class was the case of William Ruark.

When we first knew Bill, he was a clerk in the office force of a large public-service organization. Bill was a happy-hearted sort who was always doing someone a good turn. Note "always"; helping people was habitual with Bill. His genial habits attracted attention, with the result that he was "put on the street" for sales and service work.

In the outside work, he progressed steadily. The war years brought great opportunity and rapid advancement for Bill. He became recognized as a master in straightening out difficult situations in which people were working at cross purposes. Bill's great habit, you might say, was that of harmonizing personal relations between people. He became a friend of admirals, generals, famous people. His habits brought him happiness and success. Incidentally, Bill succeeded in spite of a physical handicap. We mention this only because no one thought of Bill as being handicapped; quite the opposite.

Failing to get along with people is a habit. An observant person may notice among his own acquaintances that the person who gets into difficulty with another is apt to get into difficulties with many persons. This is not an accident. It results from some personality trait, often the habit of being unduly jealous of one's dignity, rights, or position. People having such traits are likely to be in hot water most of the time.

On the other hand, getting along well with people is also a habit. People whose relations with others are smooth have cultivated and established the habit of looking for the other person's viewpoint. They have the habit of making a conscious effort to go along with the other person, to help him so that they in turn will get cooperation. They seldom have any great trouble with anyone.

William James, who did pioneer work in the psychology of habit formation, pointed out that habits develop as if they created pathways through the nerve centers. The comparison to the path of the phonograph needle on the wax record is a

familiar one. The needle thereafter follows the original pathway unless thrown into another groove. The action becomes virtually automatic.

Other theories of habit have developed refinement of that principle. Hollingworth, in his "Psychology, Its Facts and Principles," regards habits not so much as grooves or pathways worn deep in tissue as "autonomous systems of movements, linked to subtle cues. . . . not the depth of any one pathway but the exceeding number of effective shallow pathways." *

The example is given of the absent-minded professor who, because it had been raining that morning, took with him his umbrella and, because it was in his hand, opened it though the sun was shining.

Note well the word "movement" in Hollingworth's definition, for *movements and motions are the ways we form habits*, as we shall see. The word "subtle" is significant, too, because habits grow subtly "from cobwebs to cables," as one writer has said. And the word "cues" is a good cue to habit understanding.

On the positive side, if we have had agreeable service from a certain waiter in a restaurant several times, the approach of the waiter is likely to be a signal that makes us feel good before he says a word or performs a single act. His presence is the cue that puts us in the mood for another pleasant experience.

On the other hand, let's say we've had several disputes with an auditor, about expense accounts or like matters. The mere mention of the word "auditor" may make us mad. We may be pretty cold when we are introduced to any auditor. The same might be true, for a similar cause, of Presbyterians, Methodists, Chinese, Britishers, Republicans, Democrats, golfers, policemen, or college professors.

* Reprinted from "Psychology, Its Facts and Principles" by permission of the publishers, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. Copyright, 1928, by H. L. Hollingworth.

A common dictionary definition of habit is "an acquired chain of reflexes; a cultivated tendency." And in this the words "acquired" and "cultivated" may well be given thought, for habits don't just happen; they are acquired and cultivated.

We have all experienced and observed the fact that a whole series of accustomed actions is started when a person faces a familiar situation. A fair illustration is our experience in driving an automobile. When we are learning, we must consciously think of each gear shift and each operation necessary to drive, but after much practice the hand and foot operations are done by habit, leaving us free to concentrate on the traffic. We make the original decision to drive, and a train of actions follows without conscious thought.

So it is easily seen that good habits can streamline a person's life, making it possible for him to accomplish more with greater ease. William James says, "Habit simplifies our movements, diminishes fatigue." And Dr. Donald A. Laird: "Habits save time, energy, and attention and give agility to the mind. They can sweep away the routine cobwebs and free the mind for creative work." *A person may easily get twice as much out of life if he has cultivated good habits, compared with what he would have achieved with habits developed in a haphazard way.*

The very secret of getting the most and best out of life lies in setting in operation as many beneficial habits as possible. "The great thing in all education," says James, "is to make our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy." Especially is this true in dealing with people, for, as a result of habit, we react the same way, almost automatically, each time we are confronted with a human situation we have dealt with a number of times before.

We need practice in good human relations as we would in a physical process, as in playing the piano or typewriting. Practice gives us the touch that works for us like magic. It is a genie

we conjure up to slave for us, with little or no effort on our part.

The "conjuring up" of the habit takes, especially at first, some effort; but the effort should be through direct, positive action and should not be thought of as corrective action.

"Accentuate the positive," is more than a line from a song. It's a good rule for human conduct. If we do the right thing, we won't do the wrong thing. Because this is true, because new, beneficial habits are established through direct, positive action, the process is not nearly so difficult as most people think.

There is a very simple principle about habits, probably the most important principle for us to bear in mind: *Habits die from disuse; they grow strong with use.* We must apply this principle constantly. You don't have to use a lot of will power to suppress the bad, old habits; just let them shrivel and disappear from lack of use. You don't have to exert a lot of will power to put the good new habit into effect; just exercise it and watch it grow strong.

The principle of new habit formation is simply action. Don't stew, fret, or worry over it. Just act the part. Do it. Do it over again.

Just the acceptance of an idea that has merit, that appears to hold personal benefits, that makes common sense, may bring about great and helpful change in personal habits. Accept the idea and add it to your personal philosophy.

A friend tells a rather amusing and, to him, an important experience he had along this line. It shows what vast effect may be obtained from the chance taking in of an idea.

One day he noticed in a beer advertisement a line in Latin: *Moderatio in omnibus rebus est solus modus vivendi.* This man had studied Latin in high school and college, but nothing he had studied had particularly stuck with him. However, this thought, "Moderation in all things is the only method of living," struck him as making sense. He wrote it down on a slip of paper. This

single thought had a profound effect on his life. He was inclined to be an extremist, to go to excesses in various ways. This precept not only kept him from habits of drinking or eating excessively, but gave him a middle-of-the-road philosophy in politics and social life. It even led him to make efforts to harmonize people's conflicting views, a habit in which he found great satisfaction over a period of many years.

We form good habits by having a purpose backed by clearly seen benefits which lead to simple, straightforward action. Repeat the action enough times and you've formed a new habit.

A person may get encouragement or help from a friend, a book, or a lecture, but in the actual formation of the new habit he is strictly on his own. As A. Lawrence Lowell, former President of Harvard University, once said, "There is only one thing which will really train the human mind and that is the voluntary use of the mind by the man himself. You may aid him; you may guide him; you may suggest to him; and, above all, you may inspire him; but the only thing worth having is that which we get by our own exertions; and what we get is proportionate to the effort we put into it."

No one need shy away from the thought of consciously deciding what old habits he will slough off and what new habits he will take on. On the contrary, because habits govern one's life, it would be stupid indeed, would it not, for a person not to take a hand in choosing and forming his habits?

Especially is this true since *invariably the decision as to any habit is made by the individual himself.*

To be sure, most such decisions are made early in life, before a person has acquired the sound judgment that comes from long experience. So they are often based on shortsighted expediency, the desire to obtain some momentary benefit. Since habits are usually formed in a haphazard way, we are what we are, generally by chance; and that is a ridiculous and shameful fact about human nature. Some habits are bad, such as those of

a child who lies and thus avoids punishment, finally developing into an habitual liar. But the fundamental fact remains that the person decides, wisely or thoughtlessly, but of his own free will, at some point in his life, to perform the action that starts the formation of a habit, whether good or bad.

Although it is true that the habits we have at any given time govern our lives, that does not necessarily mean we have to remain subject to them, regardless of how they have been established. *If we create sufficient desire by seeing the benefits and having a definite purpose, we can substantially improve our habits at any age.*

Here we come down, in a very practical way, to the philosophical question of whether a man is to be a victim of fate or whether he will choose his course and largely decide his own fate. Circumstances and events do have an effect on life. About that there can be no doubt. But human beings are not things. As Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick points out in his book, "On Being a Real Person," "*things react* and reaction is mechanical; but *people respond*." * People can and should act consciously, deliberately in their own best interests. They should respond to life's challenge by shaping their habits, for habits largely determine each man's fate.

"What people call will power," says Dr. Fink in his book, "Release from Nervous Tension," "is simply the organization of habits around a central purpose." †

Nothing is so likely to cause a person to lead a futile and insignificant life as lack of main purpose. The person with the unfocused mind is quite certain to drift, or diffuse his energies, so that he will wind up a failure.

The encouraging thing about forming new habits is that we

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† Reprinted from "Release from Nervous Tension" by permission of Simon and Schuster, Inc. Copyright, 1943, by David Harold Fink.

gather strength as we progress. Each little victory adds personal power. Because this is true, it is wise to *start first with relatively small projects*, making sure that we succeed in each case in spite of all difficulties. Thus *we may build the most potent and valuable of all habits, the basic habit of succeeding.*

Another suggestion that applies to the starting of the new habit is: change to a new environment that is favorable to the desired habit. In human relations, this means a person should cut loose from people who complain, criticize, counsel despair or who, by example, exert an unfavorable influence. He should get into the company of optimistic, go-ahead people who, by word and example, encourage his new habit.

Reading great books, whose philosophy is in keeping with the new habit, is another sort of helpful, human environment. It is an association with great people. The superintendent of a great industrial company once said he was a drifter until he lost an arm in an accident. During his recuperation he read the Bible, the "Meditations" of Marcus Aurelius, and other great books. This reading marked the upward-turning point in his career.

Let us, at this point, note something very important, simple, and easy to grasp about habits. They are closely associated with the physical body. Therefore, one of the first steps in habit formation is to go through "outward movements" of the habit to be formed.

Yes, we mean just that, and very literally. Read what James says so clearly and with such fervor on this point. We have quoted sentences from this passage before, but now we give you the passage more completely. It will be worth your while to read it carefully.

"Everyone knows how panic is increased by flight, and how the giving way to the symptoms of grief or anger increases those passions themselves. Each fit of sobbing makes the sorrow more acute, and calls forth another fit stronger still, until at last repose only ensues with lassitude and with the apparent exhaustion of

the machinery. In rage, it is notorious how we 'work ourselves up' to a climax by repeated outbreaks of expression. Count ten before venting your anger, and its occasion seems ridiculous. Whistling to keep up courage is no mere figure of speech. On the other hand, sit all day in a moping posture, sigh and reply to everything with a dismal voice, and your melancholy lingers. There is no more valuable precept in moral education than this, as all who have experience know: if we wish to conquer undesirable emotional tendencies in ourselves, we must assiduously, and in the first instance cold-bloodedly, go through the *outward movements* of those contrary dispositions which we prefer to cultivate. The reward of persistency will infallibly come, in the fading out of the sullenness or depression, and the advent of real cheerfulness and kindness in their stead."

So it may easily be seen that the physical action is a powerful influence in fixing the habit pattern. You can easily demonstrate the effect of the "outward-movement" principle yourself. Take the act of smiling that has been mentioned. Try to smile and think a mean thought at the same time. Try smiling at people and note how they smile back at you, if you'd like to see how the first physical acts of new habit formations work for you.

It is most encouraging to realize the simple truth that new habits of tremendous importance may be formed by straight-away action, by repeated action.

Now let's say a word about the character of the desire that must go into successful habit making. The desire must be strong enough to galvanize a person into action. It must be a passionate desire. Nothing is more futile than wishful thinking. All too many people weaken their characters by vaguely daydreaming about what they might become or what they might do. Like Charles Dickens's character, Mr. Micawber, they naïvely expect that something will turn up without effort on their part. That "something" seldom turns up. The person concerned has to go out and turn it up with his own well-planned effort. Let's

not daydream about our human relationships. Let's go out and put them into effect by action.

No one need be a slave to habit. Habit can be his slave, to work for him with people—miraculously.

Finally, let's remember: the most impelling force in the life of every person is the tendency to do things over and over the same way. That's habit.

Summarized, here are the seven main points that are in keeping with practically all studies of habit formation:

1. Overwhelming desire. First, you must see definite rewards for yourself, important enough to give you dynamic desire and a clear, fixed purpose.
2. Change to a new, favorable environment.
3. Visualize yourself doing it. Clearly picture yourself doing the acts that carve out the habit pattern.
4. Commit yourself wholeheartedly and with confidence to the course of action. Remember, no fine thing was ever accomplished without enthusiasm.
5. Practice. Do it over and over, consciously and correctly. Go through the outward movements again and again, keeping the thoughts of the new habit firmly in mind.
6. No exceptions. Never waver; habit gains noticeably with each repeated action, but any exception multiplies the difficulty.
7. Think constantly of the benefits. Talk about the ways the new habit will benefit you.

In addition, the following points are made in this chapter:

Habits determine nearly every action that a person makes in relation to other people; therefore they may lead to unhappiness and disaster, or happiness and success.

Habit, once established, works automatically for or against a person.

Habits can and should be deliberately chosen and cultivated.

Good habits save a person effort, streamline his life so that he has more time to devote to recreation or creative work.

Habits are established and developed by action. They die when not used.

One should begin with the formation of fairly easy habits, thus establishing in the first place the most valuable of habits, that of succeeding.

No one should be a slave to habit. Habit should be your magic-working slave.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Can You Bear to Face the Mirror?

Most people are not aware of the habits they have that repulse or offend other people. Many laugh at the advertisements that warn of bad breath or "B.O.," but undoubtedly these advertisements have done a lot for human happiness. They have led many people to discover and remedy physical handicaps they had been unaware of, because, for a fact, "their closest friend wouldn't tell them."

Because personality habits are even more vital than physical habits in determining other people's attitudes toward us, they are worthy of more earnest thought. So at this point, think hard about yourself. But this thinking must be in a detached way, in a fresh way, in the way other people look at you.

The entire book up to this point may be used as a practical check list—the true stories told, the comments and precepts of the various persons quoted. Now think of these as they might be applied to yourself.

If we are lucky enough to have a wise, sympathetic, and courageous friend, relative, or adviser, let's ask him or her. Likely, such a person will be reluctant, at first, but let's press in until we are sure we've got a frank outside viewpoint of our

habits as they affect other people. But if no such counsel is available, we should tackle the job ourselves.

The best way to begin is to observe where we have succeeded or failed in our relationships with other people. Let's assume that, if we have failed, it is our fault. It will be difficult to bring oneself to that assumption, but *the responsibility for getting along with other people, regardless of whether they are mean or kind, reasonable or unreasonable, rests with us, individually.*

Honest confession is the beginning of salvation. The very basis of anyone's start toward better human relations is in recognizing the fact that he may have been thinking, speaking, and acting without due consideration for others. We must achieve an impartial viewpoint about ourselves. When we do achieve a detached, dispassionate viewpoint, it will become one of our most valuable possessions. It will free us from worries, anxieties, jealousies, and hates—all those emotional disturbances that make us unhappy.

What has caused us to succeed or fail in the human situations we customarily deal with? Are we patient or impatient; prone to hold our tongues or lash out against real or fancied affronts? Are we inclined always to do our part, plus a little bit more; or do we more often than not think and say that other people don't do their part? At a gathering of people do we usually wait for an acquaintance to come over and talk with us; or do we take the initiative? Are we often insulted or never insulted? All these are questions we may ask ourselves.

There are a number of professionally devised methods for personality self-analysis. But nearly anyone can get up his own personal check list of traits which he admires in others and which he would like to adopt as his own. The list may include facial expression and tone of voice, to start with. A person may well ask himself how long since he performed an act of kindness for aged or sick persons; whether recently he has gone out of his way to speak to someone; how long since he said a good

word to or about someone; how long since he told someone about a good word someone else had said about that person; how recently he held his temper in a trying situation, respected another's prejudices or beliefs however contrary to his own; how recently he avoided getting involved in an argument; how long since he obtained all the facts and weighed them before being critical of someone in a certain situation. Such questions, not as to intentions, but rather as to actions affecting other people, will soon reveal where and with what habits a person may begin to improve his human relationships.

We may find it helpful to put down on a piece of paper our points of strength as compared with our weaknesses in dealing with people. Then let's look at the two lists just as we would if we were advising a friend.

Let's examine our habit structure deliberately; as an engineer would, deciding where and how to strengthen it. Human beings have progressed only because they've been able to think, analyze, make sense out of a problem facing them, and decide on a course of action that will solve the problem. That's true in forming habits of dealing with people just as in everything else in life.

A person should not dwell only upon his defects, of course. We suggest only a clear, calm, honest look at them. Face right up to them. Don't dodge, pretend, or seek to escape by excuses or blaming someone else. *Let's accept responsibility for our relations with other people. Let's admit that it's our failure if there's been a failure. Let's see where we've failed in the past—and see why.*

We are going to turn this over to the positive side in a moment, but before that let us note that the defects we have are going to be an asset to us if we tackle them. *A person grows, develops, becomes strong only through overcoming obstacles.* Examine the life of any successful person and you'll find that he had plenty of handicaps and difficulties; but he faced up to

them, found a way around them, or rode over them. That's what made him a success.

Now let's tear up the list of our defects and think only of what we would like to be. Let's think in terms of our relations with the people whom we contact every day—members of the family, neighbors, teachers, bosses, customers, fellow employees, friends, and casual acquaintances. Let's think of the happiness and help that all our little everyday courtesies and attentions will bring them. Let's think of the benefits the good will of all these people can bring us.

Let's think of the friends, associates, or other persons we like best. What makes us like them best? Let's consider which of their attitudes and actions we might adopt reasonably as our own habits.

We shall probably find that this is the most practical and helpful thing we can do—to examine carefully the habits that happy people have in dealing with others. These will have to be people whom we know intimately; even then, it will require thoughtful study. We shall have to note in detail what they say and how they act in all the various situations in which they deal successfully with others.

Let's think out calmly and clearly what we ought to do, and just how, in every contact with every other human being. Put this into a mental moving picture of ourselves in the places where we live, work, study, or play.

Let's get a picture of the new "me" in mind, clearly and in definite detail. The definite picture is important. Let's be sure we carry our planning of new habits through to the point of a new picture of ourselves.

Finally, the most important factor in habit formation is action. Let's consider this from William James:

"No matter how good one's sentiments may be, if one has not taken advantage of every concrete opportunity to act, one's character may remain entirely unaffected for the better. . . .

When a resolve or a fine glow of feeling is allowed to evaporate, without bearing practical fruit, it is worse than a chance lost; it works so as to positively hinder you in the future."

In conclusion, he lashes out with this: "There is no more contemptible type of human character than that of the nerveless sentimentalist and dreamer who spends his life in a weltering sea of emotion but who never does a manly concrete deed." *

Now to summarize the main points of this chapter:

1. The responsibility for getting along with people rests with us.
2. We are seldom aware of the habits that offend people. We have to see them to correct them.
3. We must cultivate a detached viewpoint about ourselves and our habits with people.
4. This book can be used as a check against your personality habits; you can make a check list yourself; or you can ask the counsel of a friend in whose judgment you have confidence.
5. Write down your strengths and weaknesses.
6. A person grows strong only through overcoming obstacles.
7. Think of the people who seem most admirable to you. See which of their attitudes or actions you might well adopt.
8. Get a clear picture of the new "me."
9. Then act. Habits are established by repeated action.

* Reprinted from "Psychology" by William James, by permission of the publishers, Henry Holt and Company.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Turn Your Mistakes into Assets

Theresa Meikle, Judge of the Superior Court of San Francisco and one of the most highly respected women jurists of the country, tells this poignant story of personal defeat and disappointment. When she was attending the University of California as a student, she early set her heart on being tapped for the leading upper division women's service society, Prytanean. Finally, at the end of her junior year the time arrived. Then she felt she might well be among those who merited choice for membership in Prytanean, the society of the elect.

Well, the day came and passed. Her name was not among those announced for membership. Never had she felt so crushed—all her struggle for nought. All her yearning and striving ended in futility, her great ambition turned to bitter wormwood.

On the occasion of the dinner at which her friends at the university were being made members of Prytanean, she walked up to the "Big C," the monumental "C" embossed on the side of a hill facing San Francisco Bay. As she sat there she started to pray. Then there came to her the Biblical quotation, "If you have faith, ye shall say unto this mountain: 'Remove thou to yonder place,' and it shall remove: and nothing shall be im-

possible to you." She took her pencil and on a scrap of paper wrote, "If it is the will of God, some day I'll be made a member of Prytanean." Theresa placed the scrap of writing in a little, rusty can that happened to be there and buried it at the bottom of the "Big C."

Through this act of faith, peace of mind came to Theresa Meikle. She was graduated and went on her appointed way to great success and many satisfactions in life. One of the greatest of these satisfactions came ten years later when, seated at her desk in the chambers of her courtroom at the City Hall in San Francisco, she received notification that she had been elected a member of Prytanean.

Her decision to go ahead that night of the day she failed of election to Prytanean Judge Meikle regards as a turning point in her life. From this early *victory from defeat* she gained strength of character, a feeling of personal power and self-sufficiency that carried her to a career of outstanding success.

Without difficulties, minor setbacks or major defeats, we could not grow, develop, and become significant human beings. Every one of these crises, great or small, whether they come early or late in life, is of great importance to our future happiness and well-being. It should be met with confidence and faith. It should be overcome.

The person who, after a defeat, can pick himself up, dust himself off, and go ahead undaunted is sure of a satisfying future. "You're never licked if you don't admit it," is a time-worn saying, distilled out of long human experience. Examine the details of the career of any person you may know who is leading a worth-while and successful life, and you will find it studded with defeats, from which the happy, successful one won victories.

On the other hand, it must be noted that a person who is licked and stays licked is licked.

These people who stay licked, how do they turn out? Let's

hurry over this, because it is rather morbid and unpleasant. They are the people who are filled with self-pity. They are the people who stay brokenhearted. They are the ones who are afraid to go out to people lest they be repulsed. Often they fear to tackle anything, lest they suffer the personal humiliation of doing it poorly or of failing. These are the defeatists. These are the people who often enjoy their martyrdom, who revel in their defeat. Like people who enjoy ill health, they steep themselves in their unwholesome feelings. They feel there is something picturesque in their going down. In a way, they are like the exhibitionist who leaps from the tall building, giving his life in exchange for the two awful seconds of horror and concern he attracts. The perverted ego seeks attention and remonstrance from friends and associates, and takes pleasure in repulsing all good offices.

Let's agree then, first, that to err is human, that everyone makes mistakes.

Second, and most important, persistence is the biggest factor in success. The late William Sproule, president of a great railroad, used the term "flexible tenacity" to describe this quality. If one persists in the face of setbacks, he gains strength. In fact, overcoming difficulties is the way to a happy life. These are facts that apply in all phases of life.

Now let's consider failures in everyday human relations and what to do when these occur.

Suppose, and this is common to most of us, you are interested in personalities and inclined to gossip, but have determined to break the gossip habit. So, in the course of a conversation with an acquaintance, the name of Henry Jimerson comes up.

"Henry certainly wastes a lot of money," you remark. "His wife must have to scrimp to make ends meet."

You did it again! You carelessly dropped an uncalled-for comment that might unnecessarily hurt someone. What to do?

Retract the unfortunate remark? Well, no; you can't very well do that because it's true that Henry does spend his money like water.

Just as a suggestion, and the reader may have a better thought, why not add another comment for the other side of Henry's ledger, something equally true; say, "But Henry is about the best natured fellow I know and generous with his family just as he is with everyone else." Some such sincere comment may take the malicious sting out of your first careless remark.

Suppose, again, you have sat, in the bus coming down to the plant, next to a fellow worker, Homer Menken. Good old Homer! The first thing he did was to ask you about the family, and what happened then? Why you just talked and talked all the way in. You poured out all the family grief, about your wife's illness, how despondent she is, and what a burden that put on you. "It certainly is discouraging," you said. You piled the bad news on poor old Homer, never giving him a chance to talk nor showing the slightest interest in him or his affairs.

Later it occurs to you that you've given Homer an awful beating. What to do? Shall you call Homer up and apologize? Tell him how your ears burn with embarrassment when you think of how you quite uselessly may have got him off to a bad start and spoiled his day?

Not that. Wouldn't it be better to call him up that night, and say something like this, "If you still go up Hat Creek fishing on the week end, I was thinking you might like to try out some of my new flies. I had good results with them last time I was up there. By the way, tell your boy, Johnny, I have a new Egyptian government stamp that came on a letter from a friend of mine who's in Cairo. He might like to have it for his collection."

Something of that kind, might take the curse off what you did to Homer. Actions speak louder than words. A good way to make up for a slight to another person is to do him a favor.

Let's take something more serious. Suppose, while attending

a neighborhood meeting on some community problem, we've had a noisy row with old man Johansen. The old man was stubborn and domineering and we took on the job of whittling him down to size. The meeting broke up and Bill Topping, who arranged it, told us right out, "You sure played hell with this deal. We'll never get Mr. Johansen to go along with us now."

Well, Bill is sore and so are the rest, and old man Johansen will surely put the bite on us down at the bank. At first, we just get more and more burned up. Somebody had to speak up and when we take it on we find ourselves taking the rap. The whole bunch is against us. But the fat is in the fire and we are more mixed up and disorganized than the metaphors we are thinking with. We guess maybe we've been working too hard; couldn't sleep last night after the big run-in.

What should we do then? Just sit and stew in our own juices? Just pull down the gloom on the family?

It's Saturday afternoon. Let's take a shower, lie down, and listen to the radio. When we feel a little rested, we walk over to Bill Topping's place. Right out with it now, no excuses or halfway measures.

"Bill, I'm sorry," we say. "After you went to all the trouble of getting the men together, I botched the whole deal for you by sounding off. I have nothing against Mr. Johansen, and yet I tried to bat his ears down. Frankly I feel I made an ass of myself."

Chances are Bill Topping will say it was too bad, of course, but we'll find some way to patch it up.

"Why don't you go over and say to Mr. Johansen just what you said to me?" Bill suggests.

Apologize to that old goat? We'd die first! There couldn't be a more horrible suggestion.

"Go ahead," Bill urges. "Aside from the fact that he's old and is sick half the time, he isn't a bad sort. Tell you what I'll do—I'll call him up and tell him you're coming over to see him.

"Let's see you handle him," is Bill's final challenge.

That puts us on our mettle. Going over to see the old boy, we think hard about him, his whims and prejudices, his interests, and how he thinks and acts. This is serious. We have to bring about an understanding.

"Come in," says Mr. Johansen, when we ring his doorbell. Bill Topping has already told him by phone of how we acknowledged the blame for breaking up the meeting.

"I'm afraid I was all wrong Friday night," we crack right out. "Especially I'm sorry for the things I said about you."

"Well, yes, you were wrong," says Mr. Johansen. And he tells us in some detail where and how wrong we were. We feel the same old surge of anger coming back. Easy now, we caution ourself. Let's not argue. We've started to smooth this out and we are going all the way. We listen patiently; and is that hard!

"I raised a row about some of the side issues," we say. "Really as far as the main point is concerned, our interests are all the same. Maybe we can all get together again soon. In any event, I felt I ought to come over and tell you how sorry I am I spoiled the meeting the other night."

So it might go. And no matter how stubborn and self-centered old Mr. Johansen may be he will almost surely admire our nerve in coming to see him, in talking to him face to face, and in acknowledging we were all wrong. The chances are that when the next meeting comes, and we again publicly take the blame, old Mr. Johansen will speak right up in our behalf.

Not infrequently in such cases a good friendship comes out of a bad misunderstanding. And the one who makes the first move toward patching things up gains most. In saying this we are not talking sweet theory. It is a well-established fact, for instance, proved by the experience of many merchants and other businessmen, that customers' complaints are opportunities. If a person moves right in to remedy the situation, determined to see the other fellow's viewpoint, he brings the other

person in with him and usually makes him a permanent customer, sometimes a good personal friend.

The personal difficulty we have in situations such as that in the story we made up about old Mr. Johansen lies not in the fact that we have stumbled badly. Rather it lies in the great difficulty we have in seeing that we have stumbled; that it has been our mistake regardless of the errors of other people. We have difficulty in acknowledging it even to ourselves. That old lurking ego doesn't want us to acknowledge any error.

An honest confession is good for the soul. But hardly any one of us wants to make the confession. It is exceedingly difficult for anyone really to accept the truth that a confession of error wins the admiration of other people.

We are suggesting that, with complete self-respect and, in fact, out of our feeling of confidence in ourselves, we should be not only fair, but generous, in admitting our mistakes. This does not involve false modesty or self-abnegation.

The greatest single bar to improvement in our human relations is our stubborn, inner reluctance to admission of error. So important a bar is this that the question of primary importance is not "What if I stumble or fail?" but rather, "What if I cannot bring myself to acknowledge that I have stumbled or failed?"

What then is the answer to the latter question? Only this, that each person, in his own way, needs to cultivate a detached attitude toward his own conduct. He must learn to put the thinking part of his brain in control over the emotional part where lurks the sensitive ego. He must judge himself and his actions impartially as related to other human beings.

As mentioned elsewhere, one of the best everyday rules for good human relations is to be sure one does his part and a little bit more. In case of doubt, give the other fellow the benefit of the doubt.

However great or small the mistake, the person who has com-

mitted it should recognize it, see the error, and take precautions so that next time, in a similar situation, he will not repeat the mistake. The person who fails to recognize and profit by his failures is destined to ultimate failure. *It is an unforgivable sin for one not to learn from his own mistakes.*

In the correction of error, let's not concentrate on correcting the error, as such; but rather think of and concentrate on the right way. Every golfer knows this. If he approaches his ball with the thought "This time I must not slice," he is pretty sure to slice his ball into the neighboring pasture.

Let's keep the negative suggestions out of the mind and concentrate on the positive. Think of what we should do; not of what we shouldn't do.

If a person sets out for himself a course of action, admits errors, and quickly corrects and forgets them then; if a person persists and continues with assurance on his course of action, without feeling of remorse or regret or self-pity or defeat; if a person learns from his mistakes, THEN he can be sure that good luck and success will be his.

Consider the story of Robert Frensport. Robert had a number of handicaps to start with. One of his greatest handicaps—and strengths—was the attitude of his parents, who on the one hand doted on him and on the other instilled ambition in him. Robert was also somewhat handicapped physically in that one side of his face was slightly distorted. And his voice was harsh and flat, without flexibility.

When Robert went to college, he took up, of all things, speech and drama. By sheer drive and persistence, he became assistant cheerleader, then in his senior year, by seniority, he became chief cheerleader. Robert stumbled often along the way, but people forgave him because his heart was in the right place and because he tried so hard.

One night at a big college rally Robert committed a flagrant error in the presence of more than a thousand people. Various

names had been mentioned—the team's captain, the coach, even the president of the university—and in each case, as was customary, Robert led a cheer for the person mentioned. Then someone spoke of the founder of the college. Robert immediately leaped up and proposed a cheer for the founder, by name. This was a terrible blunder, for the founder had lain in his grave for eighty years. Cheers just aren't given for dead people. A few students started halfheartedly to follow in the cheer and then quickly quit, leaving Robert in a position of public humiliation. His face crimsoned with realization of the enormity of his offense, Robert sat down. But when occasion came for the next cheer, Robert led it.

There was a great buzz around the campus about Robert's awful mistake. Some said he ought to resign as cheerleader; others said he ought to quit college and go out west. But Robert, freely admitting his mistake, kept right on his appointed way. He served out the year as cheerleader.

In the meantime he had managed to make a success in speech and drama. He was so interested and eager, so persistent, that he was given small parts in college plays, then leading roles. He learned the technique and, because of his eagerness, the dramatic coaches deliberately chose plays where his physical handicaps would not interfere. His voice greatly improved. Robert was a success in speech and drama. He also was a member of the college debating team. He spoke at the assemblies and undeniably was a leader among the students. When the time came for a student to be selected under a certain scholarship grant to study abroad, Robert was chosen.

In closing this chapter, let's underscore the main point: *From many defeats comes the strength to win big victories.*

When you stumble, the following suggestions will help:

1. Pick yourself up every time you are knocked down. Persistence is the main factor in success.

2. Pity the person who stays licked. He's licked.
3. Cultivate a detached, impartial, unemotional viewpoint about your relationships with other people.
4. You can turn mistakes into assets.
5. In case of doubt as to who is in the wrong, take the rap yourself.
6. If you've slighted someone, it's usually better to do him a favor than to apologize.
7. People grow and progress only through overcoming difficulties, including those caused by their own errors.
8. If we do not learn from the mistakes we make, we're destined to failure.
9. Good luck and many opportunities come to him who persists in spite of setbacks.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Let Habits Work for You

As a first step toward simplifying the habit-formation process, let's trim down the basic rule: Think, speak, and act in terms of other people's interests. We assume at this point that we have thought out our relations with other people and have decided definitely on the qualities we would like to have in dealing with people. These qualities will come to life only in action. So let's drop "think" from the rule. Furthermore, "speak" can be combined with "act," because speaking is one kind of action. From now on let's go on the rule: *ACT in terms of other people's interests.*

Let's see how we may apply good habit-forming principles and practices to the improvement of our human relations.

Usually our habits take us in tow at the beginning of every day. Usually, as we have seen, they determine nearly all the actions we take. Let's reverse that. Let's take our habits in tow at the beginning of the day.

This, then, might be a typical day:

You awaken with the old familiar thoughts of how you tossed and turned for hours before you went to sleep. But you break through that old habit.

Stretch and yawn for a couple of minutes. The bath is going to be a lifesaver. Out you go and into the tub or shower. Hey, who's singing? Why, it's you, of course. Are you doing the

singing as part of the old prescription of "going through the outward movements" of being cheerful? You don't know; you've done it several days so that now it's a habit. . . . That bath was really wonderful. Then the rubdown, and you feel still better. Your troubles seem washed away. When you look into the mirror: what a sight! But you just smile at yourself. Not so good-looking, you may think, but a pleasant, friendly type. Sure, that's you: the friendly type.

Well, so to breakfast.

Your first crisis in dealing with people is likely to be at the breakfast table. A member of the family complains about something; or breakfast is late; or you don't like the eggs; or the coffee is lukewarm. Careful! Don't blow up the way you used to, or sit looking sullen and glum. This is the first test; don't deviate from your good intentions. Regardless of what is said or done, or who's right or wrong, you keep your friendly attitude. Most family rows won't help, even if you win your point. Change the subject; talk about something pleasant. Smile. Smooth it over. Let it ride. Look, the members of your family are smiling back at you. First victory!

As you start to work and pass the house next door, you see a little boy looking out the window. You smile and wave your hand. The youngster just stares. However, before next summer he'll be watching for you eagerly. You're going to get a lot of laughs and fun out of your friendship with that little fellow, and his parents will become your friends as a result of your interest.

Then you see your neighbor, the grumpy Joe Slade, ahead of you. Your first inclination is to cross the street, but instead you hurry to catch up with him. Victory number two!

When you speak, he barks back. It is one of Joe's bad days. Stocks dropped, or his wife won an argument or something. His bark is enough spark to set you off ordinarily. Usually you'd slash back with a sarcastic remark. *But today you are different.*

You are sympathetic and understanding. You listen. When you can, without affront, you change the subject; talk about something pleasant, say, baseball, Joe's hobby.

Joe softens a bit, but he can't help criticizing.

"Bill Johnson is a publicity bum," he remarks. "Boston ought to get rid of him."

Now, Johnson is a favorite of yours and you have the statistics to nail Joe to the mast, to prove Johnson is the most valuable player in the big leagues. But what you say is, "By the way, Joe, I see your daughter Martha was in the high-school play Friday night."

This really touches Joe. He grins to his ears.

"Martha's pretty good," he replies. Then, "Nice bunch of kids in that school."

These remarks really surprise you. They're the first favorable comment you ever remember the old grouch making. No argument. Victory number three.

When you get on the bus someone jostles you unnecessarily. *Look out!* Jostling is a hot cause for anger. You simply smile. But Joe, jostled also, loses his temporary good humor and blows his top. His blood pressure goes sky high; he's really mad. Let him blow. From your detached and controlled standpoint, it just seems funny. Victory number four.

The bus driver carried you past your station. Joe "handles" the situation. He tells off the driver. But by now you are really sorry for Joe; how he makes things tough for himself! You think, "The block's walk in the open air will do me good; not a bad practice regularly." Victory number five.

Then all through the day:

The boss criticizes you unjustly, some of the things you work with are misplaced. No chance to explain. Don't worry. Don't raise an issue. Your day-by-day performance will prove your worth.

Dozens of little human errors pop up and give you as many

victories. The bossy customer, the dumb stock boy, the lazy fellow worker—you find they're all human beings, perhaps a bit too self-centered, sometimes a little grabby for personal gain, a little too jealous of their own rights, very seldom reasonable. But you find they all respond to individual recognition, personal consideration, a little favor or courtesy. Already you find you've got yourself a better class of people to deal with.

Unruffled, you do your part, plus a little bit more. Nobody is pushing you around. On the other hand, some people are beginning to help you. At the end of the day you're getting on top of the job, in control of yourself and your situation. The work is definitely easier. Your usual fatigue and feeling of being baffled are displaced with a feeling of strength and well-being. You feel good!

Tomorrow will be easier. If you don't waver, the next day will be still easier. Letting no exception occur, you establish the habit of recognizing people, of being friendly and helpful to them. Thereafter, naturally, without effort, you act in this way. That's you, the new you, the one who understands people and knows how to get along with them.

So, in the humdrum of everyday life, we may find the touch, the common touch, with other human beings.

By such simple acts we can establish habits that will work for us like magic. We shall get a sense of harmony with other people and gain their respect, affection, and good will. They will be tolerant of our faults and failures. Hands that held us back will help us forward. We will rally to ourselves the support of the people around us—people who will make, not break us.

Suggested Reading

"Human Nature in the Making," Max Schoen, D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., New York, 1945.

Human behavior and how to control it, by the head of the Department of Psychology and Education, Carnegie Institute of Technology.

"Salesmanship," Carl B. Strand, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1942.

Readable. His discussions of personality will help anyone.

"Psychology," William James, Henry Holt and Company, Inc., New York, 1893.

A pioneer in American psychology describes the physical and psychological nature of habit and suggests how to make useful actions habitual. Scholarly writing.

"Successful Retail Salesmanship," Robinson and Robinson, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1942.

Well-illustrated with actual experiences of successful salespeople, particularly as related to the customer's point of view. Helpful for sales managers and supervisors.

"How to Win Friends and Influence People," Dale Carnegie, Simon and Schuster, Inc., New York, 1936, 46th Edition, 1943.

The most popular book written on this general subject; lively and easy to read.

"Release from Nervous Tension," David Harold Fink, M.D., Simon and Schuster, Inc., New York, 1943.

Written in an easygoing manner, about personality quirks that stand in the way of a free and happy life, techniques for physical relaxation, how to avoid frustrations, and how to get along with people.

"People in Quandaries," Wendell Johnson, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1946.

A fascinating book on how people make themselves miserable by mistaking words for reality. A scientific approach to semantics. University level.

"Psychology in Living," Wendell White, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1944.

Easy-to-read book about human nature and how to understand it; how to attain a feeling of personal worth.

"Increasing Personal Efficiency: The Psychology of Personal Progress," D. A. Laird, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1936.

A practical, stimulating book, easy to read.

"The Return to Religion," Henry C. Link, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1936; and "The Rediscovery of Man," The Macmillan Company, New York, 1945.

A well-known psychologist discusses the importance of activity with and for people.

"How to Develop Your Personality," Sadie R. Shellow, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1932.

Easy to read, gives advice on habits, appearance, speech, intelligence, learning, and the emotions.

"Influencing Human Behavior," Harry Overstreet, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1925.

Shows how human behavior can be changed by using new

knowledge gained through psychology; stresses habit systems.

"Hows and Whys of Human Behavior," G. A. Dorsey, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1929.

Informal discussion of various human foibles, the reasons for them, and how to overcome them. More popular, but less comprehensive than the author's "Why We Behave Like Human Beings."

"The Art of Plain Talk," Rudolf Flesch, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1946.

How to write so your ideas will be easily understood.

"Techniques of Handling People," Dr. Donald A. Laird and Eleanor C. Laird, Whittlesey House (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.), New York, 1943.

"Psychology Applied to Life and Work," Harry Walker Hepner, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1944.